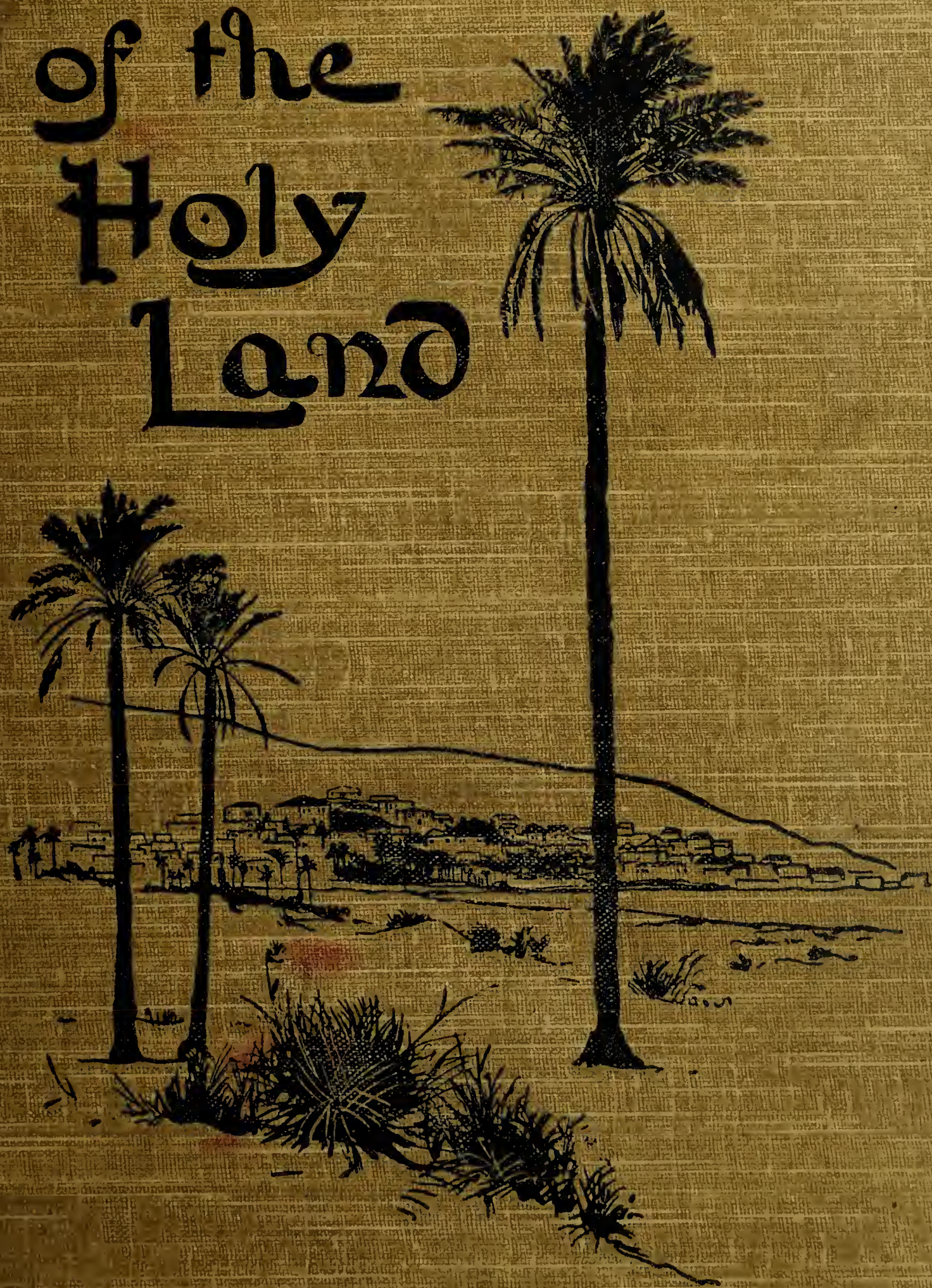


# The Romance of the Holy Land







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THE ROMANCE OF THE  
HOLY LAND



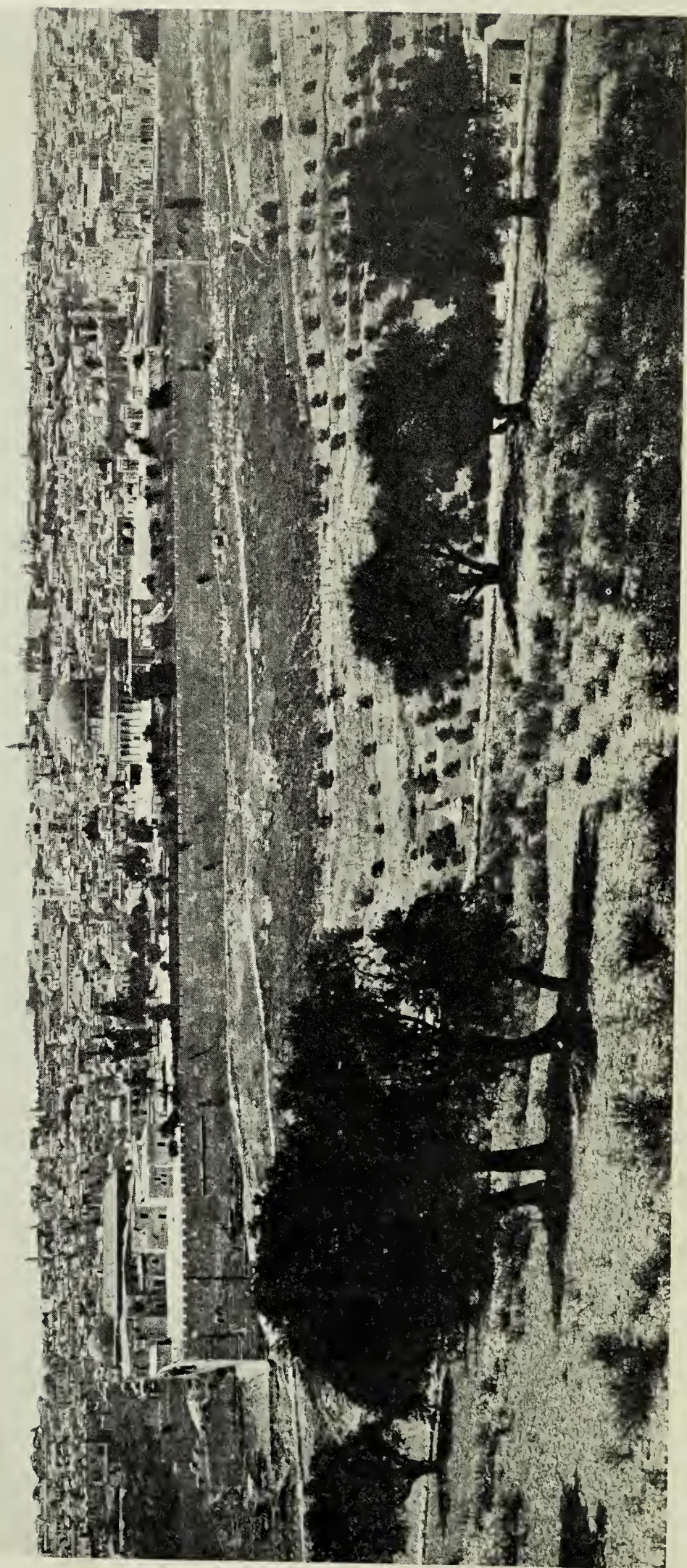




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JERUSALEM AS SEEN FROM THE MOUNT OF OLIVES.

*Photo. by American Colony, Jerusalem.*



# THE ROMANCE OF THE HOLY LAND



BY

✓  
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"SERMONS TO WORKING MEN," ETC.

LONDON  
EDWARD ARNOLD

1911

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## PREFACE

I HAVE been able to pay nine visits to the Holy Land. I can only hope that those who buy this book may find as much joy in reading it as I have in writing it. All the way through I have ever kept in mind what I may call the ordinary reader. That is to say, I have tried to produce a work that, whilst not uninteresting to the expert, may be useful and helpful to general readers. It remains to be seen to what extent I have succeeded.

In producing this volume I have drawn largely upon my own observations and what I have learned in the land, and have written of it as I have seen it. I have tried to avoid following too much in the paths of others, and merely quoting what they have said. My work, such as it is, I leave to the public, in the earnest hope that not a few may find pleasure and profit in reading it. A good deal of the book was written in the House of Commons. When the debates were dull and tedious—as they sometimes are—I retired to the great library of the House, where peace and quiet always reign.

There I found delight in revisiting, in imagination, the scenes I describe in the following pages.

It only remains for me to say that I am considerably indebted to my friend, the Rev. Dugald Macfadyen, M.A., for kindly reading through the typescript of the work, and making some useful literary suggestions.

CHARLES LEACH.

LONDON, 1911.



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# THE ROMANCE OF THE HOLY LAND

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

THERE is no country in the world so attractive to millions of people as Palestine. There is a charm about that strip of Syrian coast-land possessed by no other spot on the face of the globe of which men have heard. Nor is the hold which it has upon the affections of men of modern growth. In all the centuries of the Christian era—and, indeed, long before they began—there have been men who counted it their highest joy to dwell among its mountains, live in its valleys, beneath its clear skies, and not a few have longed to have their bones buried in its sacred soil. And when its sons were exiled from it, their eyes ever turned towards it, their hearts ever yearned for it, and their spirits found no rest except in the hope of seeing it again.

Countless millions have visited the Holy Land as the centuries have passed, and the number of those who enter upon pilgrimages to it is ever increasing. Over and beyond those who have walked its streets, seen its mountains, sailed on its quiet lake, and visited its chief places, there are vast numbers who have no

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hope of ever seeing it, who still think of it with reverence, and gladly read about it.

Nor is this interest—which seems to deepen as the years pass—confined to one class, to one people, to one race, to one nation, or to one religion.

Monarchs have doffed their crowns, stepped down from their thrones, left their people and their country, that they might take such part as they could in freeing that land from the usurper and the oppressor. Nobles, of all ranks, have counted it a privilege to sell their jewels, mortgage their lands, leave their homes, endure hardships, privations, sufferings, and even to face death itself, that they might, if possible, reach its shores, to feast their eyes and gladden their hearts by gazing upon its hills and vales. Soldiers and civilians, merchants and labourers, men from every rank of life, have turned with longing eyes towards the land through which I hope to take the readers who will peruse these pages.

If you will stand with me on the streets of, say, Jerusalem, you will see in the crowd which ever surges past men and women from every land, of every colour of skin, and every imaginable form of dress. And what is very remarkable, these crowds of people are almost as different from each other in their religions as are the hues of the garments they wear. The Jew, whether pious, sceptical, or irreligious, longs to visit the Holy Land, the home of his ancestors, and the place of his fathers' sepulchres. And there are few things he desires more than that his body should rest beneath its sacred soil.

The followers of Allah, too, are not without interest in Palestine. Whilst Mecca is their most sacred place, the Holy Land has great attractions for them. It is the land which their fathers conquered, driving out the so-called infidels, and in which they erected one of the most beautiful of their sacred shrines. Before we have finished our journey through the land, we shall learn that the Mahommedan, among other things, believes that his great Prophet went to heaven from one of its heights.

And what is true of the Jew and the Mahommedan is true of the Christian, only perhaps a great deal more so. The followers of Jesus of every name, and every sect, and every degree—and they are numerous—unite in calling Palestine the “Holy Land.” They come to see this land, or long to see it, by millions. Before Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans, and the Jewish nation scattered to the ends of the earth, we know that her sons came to the Holy City from Mesopotamia, Cappadocia, Phrygia and Pamphylia in Egypt, Crete, Arabia, and Rome. So to-day the Christians, real and nominal, come, not only from all these places, but from every land and nation where the story of the life and death of the Founder of the Christian religion has been told. And, as we shall find as we travel through it, Christians of almost every name and sect have settled in the land.

In asking the reader to accompany me on this journey to Syria, that we may have our walks and rides in Canaan, and our talks about it as it was and is, I do not invite him to accompany me to the



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exploration of an unknown land. I shall take him through, and talk to him about, a country on which much has been written, wise and otherwise.

I wish to make it clear that I am not in these pages offering a new "Guide Book" to Palestine. There are many such books already in existence. For the most part these are good and useful, though the changes which have taken place in the land during the past few years, in the Government, in the cities, and the customs of the people, make it quite necessary that some of the guide books should be revised in order to bring them up to date.

I have made no attempt to produce a scientific treatise on the History, Topography, Geology, or Geography of the country. Books of this description have been produced, and among the latest and best of them I may mention the great works on "Palestine" and on "Jerusalem," by the Rev. Professor George Adam Smith, of Glasgow; and "Ancient Jerusalem," by Dr. Selah Merrill, who was, for sixteen years, American Consul in Jerusalem. These works will supply the needs of scientific students for a long time to come.

Nor have I written of the land and its people, as those who know neither, have sometimes imagined them to be, nor as others have thought them to be, nor as some think they ought to be, nor as I myself would like them to be, but as I have seen them and know them to be.

My object is to present to the public a readable, interesting, and attractive account of the land and its people as they are to-day, and as I have so often seen



them. I have aimed at presenting such an account of the Holy Land as will interest those who have seen it, and assist them in imagination and memory once more to revisit and recall the places and experiences of the past, which gave them such delight and charm. At the same time, I have tried so to write my book, as to make it interesting to those who have not yet visited the Holy Land, and to give an accurate idea of it to those vast numbers who cannot hope ever to see it, but who, nevertheless, are deeply interested in it and the Bible of which it speaks.

I shall try to let my readers see the land as it was in days long gone by, when He walked its streets who has given to it its most lasting fame. I shall talk of its religious, social, and political life as it was then. I shall let my companions in this pilgrimage see the land as it is to-day. And if I should happen to spoil the fond fancies of some I hope I may be able to impart some information for which my readers may not be ungrateful, which shall be helpful to those who are able to visit "those Holy Fields," and a little profitable to the larger number who can never hope to go.

I shall describe the land, speaking of its certainties, of its uncertainties, of its history, its chief cities and their people, its sacred places and holy shrines. I shall speak of Bethlehem, the River Jordan, the Dead Sea, and Jericho; wander through Galilee, with its ruins of once famous cities, and its wonderful lake and mountains; halt on our way at Samaria and Jacob's Well, and thence ride on to the ancient city of Damascus.

## 6 THE ROMANCE OF THE HOLY LAND

At this point my companion readers may ask what are my qualifications for the work I have undertaken ? What do I know about it all, and how have I come to know it ?

Such knowledge as I possess of the land I have acquired in two ways. First of all by a large amount of reading and study during many years of my life ; secondly, by frequent visits to the land itself. It has been my privilege to make *nine* visits to Palestine, either as a student, for pleasure, or for the purpose of imparting information to others. Before there was any railway-train in the land, and before any wheeled vehicle could convey passengers through the land, it was my good fortune to visit it. I have ridden on horseback from Judea to Damascus, from one end of the country to the other. Since railways were built and roads made, I have been east, west, north, and south. I have several times travelled down the eastern side of Jordan, through what is now a great corn-growing district, where once the famous "Bulls of Bashan" were reared. I have several times crossed the land from Haifa to Tiberias—that is, from west to east. I have entered Jerusalem on horseback, in a carriage, and by railway-train. Several times have I crossed the Lebanon Range, by carriage and train, travelling up to the snow-line, passing under the shade of lofty Hermon, on to Damascus. On the banks of the River Abana I have sat and sipped coffee with the natives. And now I propose to tell you, as best I can, something of what I have seen, and heard, and felt upon my travels.

I ought, perhaps, to add, at this point, that my ninth visit to the land was made in March and April of this year, 1911. When I had the manuscript for this book almost complete, I determined to go out once more, in order that my book on "The Romance of the Holy Land" might be quite up to date.

With the wonderful land we are to visit and describe there is intertwined much that is remarkable, deeply interesting, and most instructive. It was to this land that Father Abraham came to erect his altars to the one God, in an age when men worshipped many gods. He set forth a religion which, in its conceptions of the Deity, far transcended any of the contents of the known religions of his day. The story of Isaac, of Jacob, and the rest of the Patriarchs, is woven into the history of this little country. It was among its hills and valleys that those bold teachers, called prophets, set forth the will of the Almighty to the age in which they lived, never hesitating to rebuke kings, and priests, and nobles, when they strayed—as they often did—from the paths of rectitude and morality. The reader should ever remember that it was in Palestine the youthful Carpenter proclaimed Himself the Messiah whom the Jewish prophets had taught the world to expect.

There is no journey in any part of the world, that I could ask you to take with me, that is so full of historic interest, to men in all walks of life, as that to which I invite you in the pages of this book.



## CHAPTER II

### THE HOLY LAND

BEFORE we take to our horses and begin our pilgrimage in real earnest, it may be well to learn a little more about the land we are to traverse.

Palestine is a very small country. Its size is altogether out of proportion to the enormous influence it has exerted, and does still exert, upon the minds of men. Anyone who cares to trace back to their source some of those forces which have most influenced great masses of men and women will be surprised and interested to discover how small some of them were. Our noble River Thames, which carries on its bosom great ships, bearing the flags of all nations, which pour the merchandise of the world into the huge warehouses lining its banks, is at its source but a tiny stream, whose course a schoolboy might divert. The British Isles occupy but a small space on the map of the world ; yet the language, literature, and arms of these isles hold sway over vast millions of the world's inhabitants.

And so it is with the Holy Land. Though the influence which it exerts is worldwide, the country itself is but small among the nations of the world. It will

astonish some, who hear it for the first time, that its whole length from north to south could easily be traversed in less than three hours by an English railway-train. It may be reckoned as being about one hundred and fifty miles long, and from forty to sixty miles wide, and at its widest point could be traversed by our train in a little over half an hour.

The whole land, including the entire territory occupied by the kingdom of Judah and the kingdom of Israel, may be taken to be about as large as the principality of Wales. Yet, small as is its area, it seems even smaller to the man who travels it from north to south and east to west, as I have so often done. There are hills on which you can stand and, on a clear day, see almost the whole land.

One quiet Sunday afternoon I stood on the hill behind Nazareth and enjoyed one of the finest and most remarkable landscape views to be had in any land. With my back to the Mediterranean I was able to see nearly the whole length and breadth of the land. Stretching far away yonder eastward was the line of the River Jordan, behind which rose the hills of Gilead and Moab, tinged with that peculiar blue which they seem never to lose when seen from a distance. In the space between were the great plains and the sites of Gilboa, Shunam, and other ancient places. To my left, in the far north, stood snow-capped Hermon, like a great sentinel guarding the entrance to the land. To my right, away south, were the hills which hid Jerusalem from my vision.

When I turned round with my back to the east

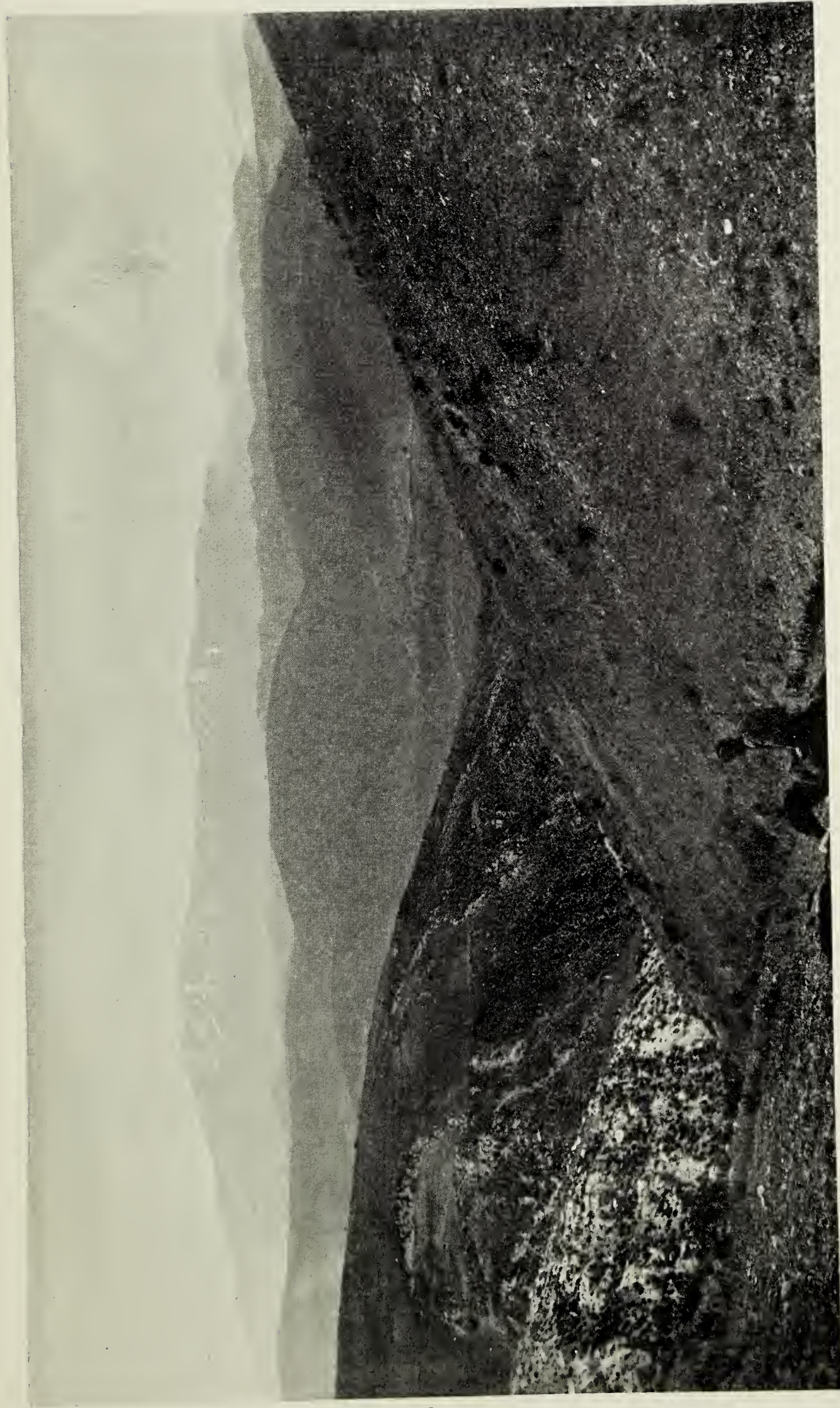
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and faced westward, I saw the blue Mediterranean leading out to the isles of the west, upon which Palestine has had such enormous influence. To my left there stretched the range of Carmel Mountains, one end dipping down on to the great plains of Esdraelon, which Napoleon said had been made by the Almighty to be the great battle-ground of the nations of the world; the other end dipping into the Mediterranean Sea. Nestling at the foot of Carmel is the famous Bay of Acre and the prosperous little town of Haifa.

The climate of the Holy Land is no less remarkable than its physical features. In that little strip of Syrian coast-land, shut in on the north by Mount Hermon, on the south by the desert over which lies the way down to Egypt, on the east by the desert, and on the west by the ever beautiful Mediterranean Sea, almost every variation of climate is to be found. Away in the north stands Mount Hermon, lifting its lofty snow-capped head into the clouds, over 9,000 feet above the level of the sea. Down in the Jordan Valley, at the point where the river enters the Dead Sea, we descend to a depth of 1,300 feet below the level of the sea.

In our pilgrimage we shall visit the plains of Jericho, the lowest known inhabited place on the face of the globe. Here, at certain seasons of the year, the heat is so great that few Europeans could live in it. You can drive from the Mount of Olives, at Jerusalem, to Jericho in about four hours. When at the top of the Mount of Olives you are 2,700 feet above the level of





*Photo. by American Colony, Jerusalem*

MOUNT HERMON AS SEEN FROM A DISTANCE.





the sea ; at Jericho you are 1,300 feet below the level of the sea.

In the Holy Land, as in no other country that I know of, you can rapidly pass from extreme heat to intense cold, from a sultry and oppressive atmosphere to one that is cool and pleasant, in the course of one single day's horse-ride. Mounting horse at six o'clock one morning, we started for a long day's ride. Overnight we had slept at a Druse village in the Lebanon district. When we started upon our journey, our horses passed through snow, and the camp servants amused themselves with what we should call a game at snowball. But before that day's ride was over we had reached a district in which no snow could be seen, and were glad to get rid of much of the clothing with which we had begun the day.

In this small land, known as Palestine, will also be found wellnigh all the species of flowers, fruits, plants, and trees which grow in almost all other parts of the world, and visitors from all countries are surprised and delighted to find here many of the familiar plants and flowers which bloom in the home lands from which they themselves have come.

“To a traveller from England,” says Dr. William Smith in his “Bible Dictionary,” “it is difficult to say whether the familiar or the foreign forms predominate. Of trees he recognizes the oak, pine, walnut, maple, juniper, alder, poplar, willow, ash, dwarf elder, plane, ivy, almond, plum, pear, and hawthorn—all elements of his own forest scenes and plantations. Of cultivated English fruits he sees the vine, apple, pear,

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apricot, plum, mulberry, and fig ; but minus the gooseberry and raspberry. Among cereals and vegetables, the English traveller finds wheat, barley, peas, potatoes, many varieties of cabbage, carrots, lettuce, and mustard ; and minus oats, rye, the extensive fields of turnips, but mangoes, and fodder grasses with which he is familiar in England."

A scholarly German writer, Lange, most beautifully sums up these remarkable features in a few choice sentences :

"Canaan," says he, "unites within itself a rich variety of most significant contrasts, by the blending of which is formed that unity, the Chosen Land, which was destined to be the place of education for the chosen people. . . . In its eastern highlands it exhibits the Asiatic characteristic of mountain vastness ; in its western formation of hills and valleys are seen touches of its affinity to Europe ; towards the south are reflected Egypt and Africa, in the glaring contrasts it presents of both paradisaic and terrible scenes ; towards the north the mountainous district of Lebanon forms the boundary of the land, the white peak of Hermon, seen far through the country, represents the region of eternal winter ; while in the low-lying tracts of the valley of Jordan the palm, the pride of tropical regions, revels in the hot climate of Arabia. How extensive is the scale of climatic contrasts in the land ! And what a happy medium in those warm boundaries of the temperate zone, in which it is easier for man to maintain the due proportion between labour and rest, in which, in the pleasant contrast of their alternative, both light and darkness could be called gifts of God, and looked upon as welcome blessings ! With the pleasant occupations of rural life between seed-time



and harvest was interspersed the romantic feature of nomadic life, and the anchorite's freedom from care for supplies was experienced within the sphere of pastoral life ; while the domestic comforts of the western life were here met with, on the very boundaries of the desert and of the torrid zone. The Israelite could often pass both night and day in open air, but not without experiencing the excitement which man always feels in the romantic wilderness of the earth. He was surrounded by the kindly sights and sounds of Nature ; but the sublime was everywhere the predominant element. His country was rich in enjoyments, but exposed to the vicissitudes of great natural catastrophes. The sharp contrast between oasis and desert, between the soil of the aromatic and variegated palm and the naked, briny, sandy rock of Arabia, is found here—*e.g.*, in the contrast between the frightful rocky wilderness of Quarantania and the blooming gardens of Jericho, and especially between the fertile borders of the Lake of Galilee and the desert shores of the Dead Sea. These contrasts point to the delicate and spiritual nature of the country, to its delicate suspension on the line between the blessing and the curse. . . . It lies midway between those great natural extremes, in which the earth seems almost to overpower man, as, *e.g.*, in the heat and luxuriance of the East Indies and in the frozen deserts of Greenland."

It is but little wonder that in ancient days man believed the Holy Land to be the very centre of the earth. Chosen, as it seems to have been, as the spot of all others in the world in which the Almighty Maker and Ruler of the world should make known His will concerning man, we cannot marvel that Palestine

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should have been considered to be the hub and pivot of the universe. There are one or two passages in the Old Testament to which, perhaps, the ancients gave too literal an interpretation. In Psalm lxxiv. 12 we read : “ For God is my King of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth.” And in Ezekiel v. 5 (Revised Version) it says : “ Thus saith the Lord God : This is Jerusalem : I have set her in the midst of the nations, and countries are round about her.”

Giving too literal an interpretation to passages such as these, and considering the peculiarities of the country, men came to think of the land of Palestine as being placed by the Almighty at the very central place of all created things.

But though the learned no longer hold these views, there are still large numbers of the untaught who think that when they are permitted to enter the Holy Land they are at the very heart of all things created. In one part of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem there is a circular piece of marble pavement in the middle of which stands a small pillar. It is believed by thousands of the ill-informed pilgrims, members of the Greek Church, who annually visit Jerusalem, that this small pillar marks the very spot which is the centre of the globe. I have often stood in that part of the church and seen scores of men, many of them on their hands and knees, approach this low pillar, reverently kiss it, and engage in the repetition of their prayers as they crossed themselves, after the custom of their religion.

About this particular spot I have heard one or two

stories which are far more poetical than real. Not only is it said to mark the centre of the universe, but from this very place was the earth taken out of which old Father Adam was made. Hence, the Garden of Eden must have been here! And at this spot, too, says one story, the cross on which Jesus was crucified was erected. Furthermore, when the soldier took a spear and pierced the side of the Crucified One, the blood which came from the wound fell upon a skull which lay at the foot of the cross, and which was the skull of old Father Adam. Thus did the first and the second Adam meet together in death!! This story is quaint, but scarcely convincing. If, however, the ignorant peasants who visit this famous church at Jerusalem really believe the fable, it almost seems a pity to rob these grown-up children of so pretty a tale.

Though we in these days of larger knowledge may smile at the suggestion of Palestine as the centre of the globe, no one can deny that it is the centre of the religious thought of many millions of the earth's inhabitants. It was there that Judaism had its birth; and men and women of the Hebrew race, now scattered far and wide throughout the world, ever think of it, and when they pray, like Daniel of old time, turn their faces towards it. It is to them the holiest land on earth, for it was there that their great Temple, built by their glorious King Solomon, stood, and in that Temple that the visible symbol of the Divine presence, the Shekinah light, could be seen by their ancient fathers. It is but small wonder that this great race



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ever prays for the restoration of their children to that sacred part of the earth.

To Christians, too, Palestine is not less the centre of religious thought. It was in that land that He whom they believed to be the Son of God and the Saviour of men was born. It was there He lived, and taught, and died, and rose again. It was there that the cross was erected on which He, whom millions believe to be the world's Redeemer, was put to a shameful death. Men and women living widely apart, under different skies, in varying geographic conditions, are drawn together in thought, and worship, and reverence, as they think of the Holy Land. And though their Founder was put to a shameful death, the cross has become the symbol of victory, of life eternal, of peace in this life, and in the world to come everlasting felicity. The light of life first shone in Palestine, and its rays have gone out into all the world. In its light, and guided by the day-star which has shone into their hearts, Christians, like the wise men of old time, visit the Holy Land, that they may lay their offerings of love, devotion, and sacrifice at His wounded feet.

That is the land we are to visit together, and such are its characteristics.

I am sometimes asked, by those who do not think much on these so-called sacred themes, What kind of men has the Holy Land produced, and what has it done for the world? I will tell the reader something of the kind of men it has given us, and of at least one great thing it has done for the world.



In studies of Palestine it should never be forgotten that whilst it had some great soldiers like Joshua, great kings like Solomon, and great poets like David, these were not its chief productions. Any thoughtful student of its history will conclude that it was most remarkable for its production of men and women whom we should call saints.

The nations contemporary with Palestine produced many notable men and women. Syria, Egypt, Greece, and Rome had great soldiers, great artists and poets, great architects and builders, and great lawyers and colonizers. Palestine produced great saints, both men and women. There were Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, Naomi, Ruth, Hannah, Martha and Mary, and that other Mary, the mother of Jesus. Its heroes were men and women of piety, of religion, of worship.

Whoever it was that wrote the Epistle to Hebrews, has allowed us to see the kind of people Israel produced. In the eleventh chapter of that Epistle he gives us a long and memorable list of the names of men and women, prominent among the Hebrew race, all distinguished for their great faith. At the end of a long list, which is not exhaustive, the writer of that Epistle says : “ And what shall I say more ? for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephtha ; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets : who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight,

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turned to flight the armies of the aliens . . . these all . . . obtained a good report through faith.”

Besides producing a race of saints, of those who believed in a Divine, over-ruling, Almighty Father, Palestine has done one other great thing for mankind : it has given us the most remarkable book in the world, the Bible.

All through the Bible the student who knows the Holy Land can see its influence upon that remarkable book. The Bible and the religion it teaches claim to be for all lands, all peoples, and all times. There is nothing in its newer and later portions that can be called narrow or local. It was intended to be a world book. Where and how could such a book be produced except in a country partaking of the characteristics of the whole world ?

A book reveals the characteristics of its writer, and shows the influences by which he is surrounded. Casts of thought, forms of speech, idioms, and all the peculiarities of the author, and his country, appear in his work. Thus a book produced, say, in the Far East, is not suited to the people of the Far West. The Koran, for instance, is necessarily more to an Eastern than it can be to a man in the West ; whilst a book produced in this country by an Englishman is not, and cannot be, as much to the man out yonder in the East as it is to Britishers here at home.

But the Bible was not for one country only, nor for one race alone, but for all peoples, under all skies, under all forms of Government, and in every station of life.

It was intended, by that over-ruling wisdom, under the guidance of which it was written, to go to the cold regions of the North and be to the people there as soft south winds, bringing warmth, and life, and joy. It was to go to the sultry places of the South, and be like cooling and welcome breezes from the mountains. It was to go to the wandering, restless tribes of the East, and bring them rest in the peace and love of the God of Abraham and the Patriarchs; while to the matter-of-fact inhabitants of the West it was to be that star of hope, and light, and liberty, which was to guide them in their conduct, and assist them in shaping their humane laws for the government of the peoples they were to organize into great and mighty empires.

This is one great thing that Palestine has done for mankind. All men owe much to that little land, which has given to the world a race of men, heroes of faith and religion, who produced that most valuable collection of sacred poetry we possess in the Book of Psalms. And it has enriched the world by the production of that Book of books we know as the Holy Bible.

And it is to this remarkable land that I want to take you in imagination, the land which millions read about, sing about, and long to see. Until I was forty years of age it was the one hope of my life that I might be able to visit its shores, walk its streets, and see the hills and valleys on which He walked and sat, who told men more about the Almighty, and more about the way of peace, and rest, and the world to come, than any other ever did or ever could.



## CHAPTER III

### JOPPA : “ THE WATCH-TOWER OF JOY ”

AND now we approach the land itself. It is from the deck of the large steamer that we have our first sight of it. As we travel we shall have many views from the hilltops. It is well that we should also look at it from the sea.

I shall never forget my first long, loving look at the land. Before we go ashore, I must tell you about that first visit, and with it my first impressions.

I had been spending about twelve days in Egypt, but was all the while anxious to come on to the Holy Land. We sailed from Port Said on a Sunday evening. When I went to rest that night, I knew that with the morning light I should see the sacred shores of Palestine.

I was on deck in the morning before the sun was up, glass in hand, waiting for the light of day. It was in the month of March. And though there was a little “ bite ” in the air, I paid no heed to it. I knew that soon I should feast my eyes with my first view of the land, and the dream of a lifetime be realized.

When the curtain of darkness was drawn back from the chamber of the skies, and the gates of the East were

unlocked to let the light filter through the mist, I saw a long dim outline which I took to be the Judean Hills. Looking more like cloud than mountain, the peaks of the lofty heights came within the range of vision. Then, as the mist was scattered, and the grey dawn gave place to the fuller, clearer light of the morning sun, I not only saw the long stretch of coast-land, but the background of mountains. I knew that behind these hills those great kings, poets, and prophets of the Hebrew race, who had done so much for religion, lived and did their work. I did not, I could not, forget that He also lived and died there whom Christians call the "Light of Life," and who is in the *Te Deum* called the "King of Glory, the Everlasting Son of the Father."

As the steamer approached the place of anchorage Jaffa, the ancient Joppa, "the Watch-tower of Joy," came in sight, rising from the very edge of the sea up far on the hillside. It made a most delightful picture. Its houses, mostly having modern red tiles, seemed to be erected in the midst of gardens.

Our steamer anchored in the roadstead a considerable distance from the shore. There was not then, nor is there now, any harbour here into which vessels may put. Happily the sea was quiet, and there was but little wind. But yonder I saw that long line of black rocks on which the white foam was rising, and on which many a good ship has been broken and wrecked. Though Jaffa is the port through which much of the merchandise for Jerusalem must pass, it still remains without harbour. I doubt if any Government beside

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the Turkish would have for so long left such an important port as this without better provision for the ships which come to it.

I cannot describe the impression made upon me that morning. And if I could I doubt if any reader would understand me until he himself has been the subject of a like experience. There are some things we cannot understand until we are the subjects of them. And, if I am not mistaken, there are some impressions which we can never experience a second time. This, at any rate, has been the case with me. On that first visit I was thrilled through and through as I looked long at the land on that morning. I have made eight visits to Palestine since then, and I always enjoy my visits, and see something fresh and new each time I go. I like to breathe the fresh pure air of its hilltops, and always am happy among its native population. But the thrill, the joy, and the uplift of that first sight have never been repeated to me.

As we must soon quit this good ship and go ashore, I will leave all sentences about the history of Jaffa until we get on to the land.

Our ship, as I said, is at anchor. After some necessary port formalities have been gone through, there begins such a wild scene of disorder and confusion as can only be witnessed in an Eastern port. A fleet of boats puts off from the shore, all making for our ship. Soon the boats are at the side of our vessel, and their occupants begin a scramble to get on board. Some of them come up the ropes and chains hanging at the side of the ship, and commence to gesticulate, and shout,



and hurry, and crowd in a manner which alarms timid people. They all want to carry us off to the various hotels and lodging-places to which they are attached, and for which they act as touts. The best way to protect your baggage, if you have any, is to sit down upon it, and remain there until the excitement is over.

At last we are on shore, and pass through the Custom-house, which, as I saw it first, was a sight to be remembered for disorder, confusion, and annoyance. When we get into the streets much of the poetry and the charm disappear. The town of Jaffa, so beautiful as seen from the sea, is far from beautiful when you are in it. Its streets are narrow, dirty, and winding. The houses seem to have been put up anyhow, and have no order except disorder. Donkeys and camels may be seen in its streets. The dress of its men and women will surprise those who have never before seen the population of an Eastern city.

In the bazaars there is but little to interest one, and so we will go at once to the house of Simon the Tanner. On our way we stop a moment, and see the corn-merchant and his customer. His grain is in a heap on a mat. In the Bible (Luke vi. 38) there is a passage which speaks about good measure, pressed down, running over. If you wait here and watch you will see an illustration of this. The customer may measure for himself his purchase. You can understand that he will give good measure. He presses it down, and piles on the grain until it runs over.

The house of Simon the Tanner, as it is now called, is a small Mahommedan mosque in a very dirty part

of the town. We pass up a flight of steps outside the house, and, bending our heads beneath the branches of a fig-tree, we step on to the top of the flat roof of the building. We need not discuss the question whether this house stands on the actual site on which stood Simon's house. We know that his house was by the sea, and so is this. While no one knows the actual site, I do not see why this, which answers the description, may not be it.

With the sea in front of us, Jaffa behind us, and a bright and glorious sun shining over us, we may rest here a little while.

Jaffa, the scriptural Joppa, is one of those ancient cities whose history is difficult to trace. We know it existed long before the Christian era. Behind its known history there is a long period of myth and fable, in which we lose ourselves in the unreal and unknown.

We may, however, affirm, with some degree of confidence, that it ranks among the oldest cities of the world as known to man. Classic story even makes Jaffa the scene of the mythological narrative of Andromeda and Perseus. It is not many years since the rock on which she was said to have been chained, before Perseus delivered her, was shown to visitors. Even the iron ring to which she was fastened on the rock was to be seen ! Doubtless that iron ring in the rock was put there by some ancient people, perhaps the Romans, for the purpose of having boats fastened to it.

Setting aside all these stories, we may pass to real history. We know that, as far back as the days of Joshua, Joppa was there. It was one of the cities

which were given to the tribe of Dan by lot under the direction of Joshua, during whose leadership the Israelites entered the Promised Land. From that time down to ours its history can be traced, and what a history it is ! Fire and sword have done their worst upon it. Its inhabitants have been massacred time after time, its goodly houses burned, its ramparts destroyed, and the whole place has run red with the blood of the slain.

Notwithstanding the strange and fateful history of Jaffa, it has always been a most important port for Palestine. And it has also been a difficult one to enter and remains such to this day. It not infrequently happens that steamers which approach it are unable to land either passengers or goods, and must sail away. In the days of the Apostles, and earlier, there was a considerable trade here in timber, which came by sea from the forests of Lebanon. Tanneries and other works would doubtless be here. All the merchandise of a chief port was carried on.

As you gaze out on that beautiful stretch of the Mediterranean Sea, you may be interested in the story of several remarkable things which took place here.

In the Book of Jonah there is a record of a man of that name who received a call to go and preach to Nineveh that it might repent and turn to the merciful Lord of heaven. That ancient missionary was afraid of the task laid upon him, which seemed more than he could bear. So, instead of facing the difficulty which seemed to lie before him in the path of duty, he lost heart, turned aside, and fled into this city of Joppa.



Finding a ship here which was going to Tarshish, he entered it, paid his fare, and fancied himself safe. He little thought of the adventures that were before him, nor of the inconvenience of being thrown overboard. As you look out on that calm blue sea, you may imagine the wild storm and the struggling seamen and this fleeing missionary all before you.

When Solomon was to build the Temple at Jerusalem, he arranged with Hiram, King of Tyre, to supply him with logs of cedar and pinewood, to be used on that building. The timber was cut in the forests of Lebanon, and floated down this same sea to this port at which we landed. Carried on the backs of camels, it was taken across the plains of Sharon, up into the Judean hills, on to Jerusalem.

But perhaps the most remarkable event connected with the city took place in this house where we now are, or rather on the top of the house which once stood here. I refer to the vision of Peter, the Apostle of Jesus. In the tenth chapter of the Book of the Acts of the Apostles we have an account of the remarkable vision which Peter had on the housetop. He saw a sheet let down from heaven, which contained all manner of creatures which the Jews considered to be unclean. He was commanded, notwithstanding their uncleanness, to kill and eat of them.

Some readers are perplexed as to the meaning of this event. It ought not, however, to present much difficulty to those who will think a little. Peter was a Jew, and at Joppa there were many Jews. Up to this point it seems as if the Jewish disciples of Jesus

imagined that the teaching and salvation of their Lord was only for the members of the Jewish race. So far as we know they had not yet offered the blessings of salvation to any Gentile. Quite failing to realize the spirit and mind of Jesus, and not understanding the breadth of His mission, they tried to keep it all within Jewish limits.

But to Peter this was not right. It seemed to him that this stream of light and love could not be kept within Hebrew bounds. He was not content, as some leaders at Jerusalem seem to have been, with this narrow interpretation. He could not reconcile the great words of Jesus with such a limited interpretation of them. His mind was full of this theme. He was wondering how he could, with a good conscience and an easy mind, get out of this little groove into a larger space. That he must get out of it there could be no doubt. He would, somehow, break through these cramped ways. His presence in the house of a tanner is significant. The occupation of tanning was, by strict orthodox Jews, regarded as almost unclean.

When Peter lay down on the housetop with these subjects perplexing him, he had a sort of daydream. And while he dreamed and wondered what it all meant, there came a request for him to go to the home of Cornelius, a Roman, and therefore a heathen. He answered the call, went with the messengers, entered the house, preached the Gospel, and those who were willing were baptized into the new religion (Acts x. 47-48).

It was there in that house, in the presence of the

soldier and his household, that he made that great and marvellous statement that "God is no respecter of persons." It was a brave, bold act on the part of Peter, and he had to answer for it, and defend himself before his colleagues of the infant Church at Jerusalem. But the day was gained, Peter won their assent, the leading strings were broken, and Christianity was saved from becoming merely a new sect of Judaism. How much we, and all men of the Gentile races, owe to Peter for this courageous act we cannot tell.

Such was Joppa—now called Jaffa—at the beginning of the Christian era. Now we must have a look at it as it is in these days, and hurry on. If it were not the chief port of entry and departure from Palestine, but few of the tens of thousands who now land there would be at the labour and expense of visiting it. I have spoken of its narrow streets, all ill-kept and not over clean. Its soil and climate seem well adapted for fruit-growing. It has always been a place where oranges were grown, but of late years this industry has enormously increased. Jaffa oranges have become famous wherever fruit is eaten. Vast numbers of acres of land outside the actual town have been turned into beautiful orange-gardens. Tens of thousands of packages of the fruit are annually shipped from Jaffa to all parts of the world. As you pass along the roads among these orange-gardens, the air is filled with the rich perfume so peculiar to the blossom.

It is interesting to note that here in the spring you may see in the gardens some trees laden with the rich golden fruit, while other trees in the same gardens are



covered with bloom. If you go to visit the so-called tomb of Tabitha, better known to us as the good woman Dorcas, you find yourself in the midst of an orange-grove.

Other fruits grow here, such as lemons, pomegranates, and melons. For miles around the scene is one of beauty. A colony of Germans will be found here, who by their industry and labour have helped to increase the fertility and well-being of the town.

Of the religious sects of Jaffa I must not stop to speak. I can only say that much good work is done among the girls and women by Protestant workers. The Jews and Moslems have their places of worship.

## CHAPTER IV

### ON HORSEBACK TO JERUSALEM

THERE are several ways in which pilgrims can reach Jerusalem from Jaffa. You can now go by train, and though it will sound strange when you hear men say, "Take your seats for Jerusalem," the railway-ride is not without interest. The train winds in and out as it ascends among the Judean hills, ever rising until almost at the Holy City itself.

There is a fairly good road, and the traveller may go by carriage. This is more interesting than going by train. From a horse-drawn carriage you get a far better and more informing view of the villages and settlements through which you pass than is possible from a railway-carriage.

You may also go on horseback all the way. This is perhaps the best of all methods of reaching the city whither the tribes go up. It is the slowest of all the three methods named, and is now the least used. The train is the quickest, the carriage the most attractive, and the horse the most leisurely. I have travelled the distance by all three methods, and so can speak from experience.

The night before starting from Jaffa, we had our first night's rest in the Holy Land. Like Abraham of old time, we dwelt in tents. For appearance, comfort, and interest, the tents used in Palestine are all that plain men could desire.

We rose in good time to prepare for our day's ride. After an early breakfast our dragoman ordered us to mount our horses, which were saddled ready, and being fresh, were eager to be moving.

The first time I saw a Palestinian dragoman I fear I looked at him so eagerly that he must have thought me somewhat rude. In my notes, written at the time, and on the spot, I find these words: "You would laugh to see our dragoman, or native guide. His head is done up in a fancy wrapper, and he wears a long coloured coat, like a lady's morning robe in shape. Round the middle he has a red cloth or scarf. He wears long boots, a leather belt, carries a sword at his side, and a loaded revolver in his case."

The dragoman is a great institution, a remarkable person, and is generally able to speak several European languages as well as the Arabic of the country. He takes command, directs affairs, manages the native servants, and is, upon the whole, polite, most obliging, and gentleman-like to all the pilgrims.

And now we mount our horses and make a start.

Riding past acres and acres of orange-groves, we revel in the sweet, perfume-laden morning air, so welcome to us all. Soon we are on the great and interesting plains of Sharon. As it is spring-time, the wild flowers are blooming in all their beauty. Their glory



is such that even Solomon was not arrayed like one of them. They seem to cover the ground almost like a rich variegated carpet.

I looked closely and inquired diligently for the Rose of Sharon, but I did not find it. The predominating colour of the wild flowers seemed to be the red of the anemones. These are found in all the country districts of the land, and especially in Galilee. There is a pretty story told about this beautiful crimson flower. When Jesus was on the cross at Jerusalem, the story says that at the foot of the cross there was a pretty little white flower. When blood from the side of the crucified fell to the earth, one drop of it came upon the flower and changed its colour, and ever since then it has been the red flower we now see in the Holy Land !

This plain of Sharon is very wide and extensive. It is probably the largest in the Holy Land. It is said in its size to surpass the plains of Tyre, and even the famous Esdraelon, and it may, I think, certainly be classed as the largest to be found on the west side of the Jordan. It includes all the district formerly occupied by the Philistines. It stretches away from Jaffa as far as Mount Carmel, and along the sea-coast for many miles.

These plains of Sharon seem always to have been fertile and fruitful. There are many villages under the shelter of the swelling hills which rise here and there. Isaiah (lxv. 10) says : " And Sharon shall be a fold of flocks, and the valley of Achor a place for the herds to lie down in." In these days much fodder

for cattle is grown, besides great quantities of corn, and wild flowers exist in great profusion.

It would be wearisome to enumerate all the places through which we pass during the two days occupied in the ride from Jaffa to Jerusalem. Suffice it to say, that many of them are deeply interesting, and not a few of them are associated with Holy Scripture. There is the Vale of Ajalon, where Joshua defeated several kings, and where he bade the sun stand still. We pass Kirjath Jearim, where the ark of God rested for many years. We ride through the Valley of Elah, where David fought the Philistine giant, Goliath of Gath. Passing through this place, I tried to imagine the armies of Israel and of the Philistines lining the hillsides, and looking on while the shepherd's boy with his sling and stone went out to meet and fight the seasoned soldier, and bring him to earth.

One of the villages we passed was pointed out by our dragoman as the place where the penitent thief who was crucified by the side of Jesus, used to have his dwelling. When I inquired who lives there now, our guide at once answered : " The *impenitent* thieves."

Though we cannot linger much on this journey, we must not forget the place called Ramleh. Here it is usual for those who ride or drive to stay the night, so here we give up our horses.

It was at Ramleh that I had my first sight of the lepers. Since then I have often seen companies of them, but those I first saw moved me to pity, and I longed for the healing power of Him who is reported to have said on one occasion to a leper :

“I will ; be thou clean.”

There is a tradition which makes this place to be the ancient Arimathea, where dwelt that rich man named Joseph, who had a new grave in a garden at Jerusalem, in which the body of the crucified Nazarene was put, and across the mouth of which was placed the symbol of Roman authority. In this case as in so many others, we have to accept the traditional statement with a good deal of reserve. It is also said that Nicodemus, the rich ruler who came to Jesus by night, had a residence here. I hardly think this can be true, but a Latin convent has been erected over the reported site.

Ramleh has sometimes been called the City of the Crusaders. There can be little doubt that many of them came here. When the French invaded the Holy Land, Napoleon made this place one of his headquarters. There is a great square tower here which may have been erected in the fourteenth century. All visitors should go up its steps which are said to number over one hundred. On looking at my notes, written when at the tower, I find these words : “What a sweet perfume comes here. The day is a little hazy, so our view is rather obscured. We can see Ashdod, Askelon, Gath, Gaza, Cæsarea, the Mediterranean, and the mountains of Samaria.” It is a fine place from which to get a grand view. The whole plain of Sharon for miles spreads out before the beholder like a many-coloured map. Dr. Thomson, who also visited and ascended this tower, thus describes the scene :



“The whole plain of Sharon from the mountains of Judea and Samaria to the sea, and from the foot of Carmel to the sandy deserts of Philistia, lies spread out like an illuminated map. Beautiful as vast, and diversified as beautiful, the eye is fascinated, the imagination enchanted, especially when the last rays of the setting sun light up the white villages which sit or hang upon the many shaped declivities of the mountains. . . . What a paradise was here when Solomon reigned in Jerusalem, and sang of the ‘Rose of Sharon.’ ”

We resume our journey, and in due time begin to ascend the last of the Judean hills before reaching the Holy City. It is impossible for any Bible reader to follow the road we have taken and remain quite unmoved, as he remembers that prophets and apostles have left and approached Jerusalem along this very road. On their mission for truth and righteousness they must often have passed through the valleys, and up and down the hills it has now been our experience to walk over. And perhaps our Bible-loving reader will remember that his Lord also passed over these ways, and in some senses made them even more attractive.

The man who knows the outlines of the ancient history of Jerusalem will think of the armies of the different nations who have come this way on their conquering missions. It has been the misfortune of the Holy City to be the object of attack of many and various fighting men as the ages have passed. Before the Christian era and since, invading armies have besieged and sacked this world-famous city.

The legions of these various countries came the way we have come. Almost all the attacks upon this city would be from the north, the way by which we now approach it. Josephus, the ancient Jewish historian, tells of many disasters which Jerusalem had experienced before his day. Since then it has had many more. Perhaps the most cruel of all was when the Romans, with their conquering legions, starved the ancient city into surrender, and slew her sons and daughters in such vast numbers, that the streets ran red with the blood of the slain and the sewers were choked with the bodies of the dead.

The tramp of armed men strikes the ear of the imaginative pilgrim, as he approaches the place he has travelled so far to see. The song of the Crusader—as with his cross-marked banner he comes to rescue the cradle of his faith from what he calls the Infidel and Turk—fires his imagination and stirs his soul when he has climbed these hills, up the last of which we have now come.

At last the city is in sight, its walls rise before our eyes, and soon we must enter its gates. Though the view of the city from the Jaffa road is not by any means so attractive and impressive as the view from the Mount of Olives, my first sight of its grey, dull ramparts greatly impressed me. With uncovered head and beating heart I looked long and lovingly at those battlemented walls.

How can I forget it? How can anyone forget it who has had the joy of seeing it? It was in the afternoon of a day in early spring when I

first rode to the city. The afternoon sun made those old, grey walls appear to me more beautiful than they have ever done since.

When I went to bed that night it was with a feeling of deep gratitude, and earnestly praying that I might be counted worthy to enter the New Jerusalem.



## CHAPTER V

### JERUSALEM, ANCIENT AND MODERN

HAVING reached the city, which has occupied and still occupies so large a share of the world's thought, we may glance a little at its history. The historians of Jerusalem are a multitude whom few men know, fewer still have read, and perhaps fewest of all desire to read. It seems quite impossible to say anything new about the place, for almost everything worth telling has already been told. From the first century of the Christian era, when Josephus wrote, to the present century when Dr. George Adam Smith gave us his two scholarly volumes on Jerusalem, so much has been said, and so well said by many, that but little room is left for others.

I will not, however, encumber these pages and weary the reader with long quotations from these numerous and enthusiastic writers, but simply tell the story, as I understand it, of the city in ancient days, and as I have so often seen it in these modern days.

It should be remembered that Jerusalem is a mountain city. High and lifted up, it stands at a great height above the level of the sea. The pilgrim can

now travel by train from Jaffa, where he leaves the sea, to Jerusalem in less than four hours. The distance that way is about fifty-four miles, yet in that short distance he rises to a height of 2,500 feet above the sea-level. The Mount of Olives is said to be no less than 2,700 feet above the sea.

The earliest records we have of this city are to be found in Holy Scripture. And these make the situation appear pleasant and attractive. The inspired writers tell us many things about it. The Psalmist speaks of Jerusalem as a city that is "compact together," and mentions her "walls and palaces"; he asks his readers to note her "towers," her "bulwarks," and her "palaces," and the Song of Solomon speaks of the city as "comely Jerusalem."

When we first know Jerusalem it was inhabited by the Jebusites, a strong and bold race, who defied all attempts to dislodge them from mountain-fastnesses. Though the city was given to the tribe of Benjamin, the men of this tribe seem to have been quite unable to drive out the Jebusites. So they had to be content to dwell with the Jebusites for a long period (Joshua xv. 63). So strongly had this mountain-race fortified themselves that they could defy and even ridicule those who attempted to dislodge them. Generations passed before any of the Hebrew race proved equal to the task of taking the fortress.

When David, the shepherd boy, had become King of Israel, with his seat in the south, at Hebron, he determined to try to take the city. In the eighth year of his reign at Hebron, and when he himself was

under forty years of age, he gathered his forces together and came up towards Jerusalem to attack it. When the men of Israel were before the fortress, under the command of their King, the men of the city felt confident in their stronghold that none could dislodge them. They had withstood all others, and could withstand these. They took to ridicule and taunt. But they little knew with what courage David had inspired his men by his own bravery. Addressing his soldiers, he gave them instructions that they must get at the enemy by means of the watercourse. Right well did David's warriors carry out his instructions. In spite of all opposition, and driven on more keenly by the taunts of the mountaineers, they attacked the citadel, cut off the supply of water, entered the city, and made themselves masters of it. The name of the soldier who first entered the city is preserved for us. One Joab, the son of Zeruiah, appears to have led in that great conflict.

Having taken the city, the old name of Jebus was changed, and thereafter it was known as the "city of David." It was here that King David fixed the seat of his government, and made this mountain-height the capital of his kingdom. We know of several cities in the Holy Land where kings had their capitals: Hebron, Jerusalem, Shechem, Samaria, not one of them at the sea. David, we are told by the writer of the Chronicles of the Kings, dwelt in the castle, and "built the city round about, even from Millo round about: and Joab repaired the rest of the city" (2 Sam. v., 1 Chron. xi.).



After making himself master of Jerusalem, David appears to have rapidly increased in wealth and power. The Bible, speaking of him at this time in most expressive language, says : "He waxed greater and greater."

We know that he had his dwelling on Mount Zion, and greatly added to the beauty and wealth of the city. Afterwards his son Solomon enormously increased the glory of the ancient city. With the material which his father David had gathered together, and to which he himself added, he built the ancient Temple, which became the glory of the Jewish race, and for the restoration of which that pious people still prays.

Scholarly students have tried to describe for us the ancient city as it is first known in history. They do not all agree among themselves, but the labours of all of them help us. Some suppose that the city which David took was the part which we now know as Mount Zion, in the north-western part of the present city. Around that point, which is the highest part of the city, many dwellings had been erected. There are four parts of the present city, all within the walls, each known by a different name. To each is added the descriptive word "Mount." It is on and around these four hills that Jerusalem is built. Each of these, in those far-off days, was separated from the rest by deep valleys, or gorges.

These hills are not easily traced to-day by the casual onlooker, for the valleys which divided them have been filled up by the hand of Time. Fire, sword, and the ravages of the ages have to a great extent levelled

these valleys, but they can be traced. There is Mount Zion, on which David and Solomon had their dwellings, in the north-western portion of the city. Though there are some who place Zion elsewhere, I hold to the traditional view, as do some of the scholars of Jerusalem. Zion rises something like 300 feet above the Valley of Hinnom, which is to the south of it. Mount Moriah, on which the Temple stood, is at the south-eastern portion of the city. On the western side of this hill is the valley known as the Tyropoen, which divides it from Zion; and on the east of this hill, the deep Valley of the Kidron, which, as seen from the ramparts of the Temple area, is most impressive. Mount Moriah is known now as the Temple area. On it stands the beautiful Mosque of Omar, to be visited and described in a later chapter. The whole area of the Temple is large. The area of Jerusalem inside the present walls is about 209 acres, of which the Temple covers about 35.

On the north-east we have Mount Bezetha. Those who have given much time and thought to these matters tell us that Bezetha was outside the walls of the city in the days of Jesus, and was enclosed by Herod Agrippa.

The fourth of the hills is known as Mount Akra, and it is on the north. If you stand at the north-west angle of the city walls, you notice that you are at the highest part of the city. You are a little higher than Zion, than Akra, and Mount Moriah, all of which may be seen at their lower levels.

Mount Moriah is the lowest point, standing at the

south-east, so that you will understand how the city falls all the way down to the south-east corner, where you find the deep gorge of the Kidron.

Entering the present city by the Jaffa Gate on the north-west, you soon become conscious of the slope, for there are wide steps in the streets down which you must pass to reach some of the parts of the city just named.

Though no one can tell us with certainty just what the city was like when David and his warriors drove the Jebusites out, every student may make his own plan, and reconstruct the ancient city according to his reading and imagination.

My own view is that around each of the four hills little towns had gathered. The men of those days took to the hills for safety. They would cultivate the valleys and terraces of the hills, and their rude dwellings would spring up on these hillsides. And it may well have been that each of these was fortified by some kind of wall behind which the residents would live in such security as the rude fortifications they were able to construct gave to them. In those far-off ages the law recognized by men was that of the strongest. At some later date walls were constructed which enclosed two, then three, and finally all four of these hills as we find them to-day.

When David and Solomon had enriched the city it assumed far greater importance than it had before known. Engineering works of some importance were carried through with a skill and enterprise that we may admire even in these days. There was the great



enrichment of Zion. The construction of goodly houses, palatial residences, and above and beyond all the Temple, with its many buildings enriched with gold and silver, and precious stones, and cloths of the richest which the looms of those days were able to produce.

The name and fame of this ancient city spread to all parts of the world. Monarchs, princes, and rulers came to see its beauty. Such was the wealth and skill of those days that the deep valley, lying between Mount Moriah, on which the Temple stood, and Mount Zion, on which the King's palace stood, was bridged by the construction of a set of arches, on which was built a roadway from one hill to the other.

News of the wealth and beauty of Jerusalem reached the remote region of Sheba. The Queen of that country, attended by a great company of camels, bearing spices and abundance of gold and precious stones, and a large retinue of men of state, came to the mountain-city to behold its glory. When she had seen it, though herself a person of great dignity and magnificence, she was constrained to say that the half had not been told her.

In another chapter I shall try to describe Jerusalem as Jesus saw it. In the remaining sentences of this one I must say something of Jerusalem as it is to-day.

After my first night's rest at Jerusalem, I rose early, that I might enter the Holy City. I had slept under canvas outside the walls, and wanted now to enter the gates. From the time when I was a child in the Sunday-school, like other children, I had read and sung

about Jerusalem—its heaven-built walls, pearly gates, and streets of gold. Who has not sung about “Jerusalem the golden, with milk and honey blest” ?

These and other glorious figures of speech had raised my hopes and fired my imagination, and made me expect to find something different from anything I had ever seen in any place. And I did find some things different from all other places I know, but not at all of the kind I expected.

But I must take you into the city. We enter on foot at the Jaffa Gate. At that time carriages could not easily enter Jerusalem. Now a great breach has been made in the walls. When the German Emperor visited the city some years ago it was thought that he should be allowed to drive in, so part of the wall was removed at the Jaffa Gate, and now a carriage can pass in.

Here we are at the Jaffa Gate. When once we are inside and walk a few paces, we find ourselves in the midst of a motley and moving mass of people of all sorts and sizes and colours.

We pass down David Street a little way, and then stand to look at the little shops, with perfectly open fronts, with all sorts of eatables displayed for sale, and all sorts of people to handle them. The noise, the smell, the dirt, the crowds, bewilder one. The charm, the poetry, the glamour, the glory, all seem to go. The spell is broken, the dream is over. You stand like one bewildered. Is this Jerusalem ? Can this be the city I have come so far to see ? Was it here that Jesus lived and died ? Did our Lord really visit this dirty, insanitary, ill-ordered city ?

There are some very good people who visit the Holy Land, and who go to the top of Mount Olivet to get their first view of the place. As seen from that spot it is indeed a glorious view. It is a sight never to be forgotten, and probably never will be forgotten by those who see it. These people to whom I refer believe that some day their Divine Lord will come to earth again, and, with those who love Him, enter Jerusalem for His millennial reign. They go away having seen the city from afar. When asked why they will not enter the gates they reply that they will never go into that city until they enter it with Him.

If I had the ear of such people I should say : " My dear friends, I can assure you that you do not miss much." And yet I must take you into the city. I should be sorry for you to miss it. It is just when you are having your shock in its streets that you need a guide who can tell you about it, and help to bring back some of the charm you seem to lose. He will tell you that these are not the streets on which the feet of the great Teacher pressed as He passed to and from the Temple. The streets of Jerusalem to which He came lie far beneath those on which your feet and mine must walk to-day. Anywhere from 20 to 40 feet below these slippery, dirty streets lie buried those which bore His footprints. When we go to see the sacred places we may here and there see bits of the old city, laid bare by excavators and builders. Whenever any building is to be erected, and the workmen dig down for foundations, they invariably come upon some interesting and historic relic.





*Photo. by American Colony, Jerusalem.*

A STREET IN MODERN JERUSALEM.



*Photo. by American Colony, Jerusalem.*

THE WAILING PLACE OF THE JEWS.





I only want now to give you an idea of the city as it is seen to-day. Though the city has changed, I do not think that the manners and customs, dress and habits of the natives are much altered with the march of Time.

Passing down the street, you will see the money-changer, as of old, with his table, his box, and his coins of many values ready, for a consideration, to oblige you. If you stop in the street to make a purchase, and hand the tradesman half a sovereign or half a Napoleon, it is more likely than not that he will be unable to give you change. I have often been surprised to see the shopman leave his goods while he ran off to the money-changer to get the change he needed, but did not himself possess.

You will probably see the porter, the labouring-man, as we should call him, carrying enormous burdens, which look too heavy for a man to carry. As you notice his burden, you will think of that saying of Jesus : “ Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” At almost every turn you will see something to remind you of those ancient times and customs of which you read in your Bible.

With all its hurry, and smell, and crowd, and noise in its main streets, I love the city of Jerusalem. I like to watch the movements of its people. I notice, with interest, the Jewish priest, as of old, passing to his place of worship. I see the rich man “ clothed in purple and fine linen.” And I do not fail to observe Lazarus in his poverty and rags. I sometimes see the Publican, as of old, collecting his taxes, which are farmed much after the fashion of those far-off times.



One who has lived in Jerusalem for half a century, speaking of its streets, thus describes them as they may be seen to-day :

“Turkish soldiers in tattered cotton uniforms ; Fellahin from different parts of the country ; government officials in red fezzes and ill-fitting European clothing, somewhat clerical in shape ; women in long white or coloured sheets, enveloping them from head to foot ; Christian ecclesiastics, wearing long dark robes, and head-dresses of different shapes ; Jews in long kaftans and black hats ; peasant women in dark blue gowns and with white veils over their heads ; Bedu from the Balka, armed with scimitar and huge, old-fashioned flint-lock pistols ; and tall, fiercely looking Circassians, who have in sanguinary fights ousted those very Bedu from the old camping-grounds and pasture-land east of the Jordan ; Greeks from the Archipelago ; Persians wearing long, conical, and comical, brown, sugar-loaf-like hats, with green turbans wrapped round their bases ; negroes, Hindus, Arabs, Italians, Frenchmen, Orientals, Europeans, Africans, and Yankees ; in short, all sorts and conditions of men and women, in all sorts of clothing, meet and jostle each other as they pass through the narrow thoroughfare, or try to do so.”\*

This is a most accurate and realistic description of the streets of Jerusalem as they are to-day. When we go round the city to look at the sacred sites and holy places we shall see every item in this paragraph before our eyes.

In the Jerusalem as we know it there is one thing which I do not think could be found there in the Jerusalem of ancient days. I refer to its numerous

\* Rev. J. E. Hanuer.

and multitudinous beggars. I do not simply mean the halt, the blind, and the lame. These were there twenty centuries ago, as we shall see them there in our journey. Most Eastern cities are noted for poor suffering creatures of this kind, and Jerusalem is no exception. All visitors are moved to pity as they gaze upon these afflicted ones. Blindness is especially prevalent, and is not confined to persons of any particular age.

Nor do I refer to the lepers, who are more numerous than one likes to see, and of all the pitiable objects these are perhaps the most so. Men and women, and not all old—there they are in various stages of decay. Sightless eyes, disfigured faces, handless arms, and crippled legs. The pilgrims soon begin to feel how hopeless it is for them to do anything among this great mass of suffering and sorrowing men and women.

But it is not this class of beggars which especially distinguishes Jerusalem above all others. I rather refer to its multitude of well-fed and well-clothed professional mendicants, who wax fat on the gifts of Christians of other countries. I am told that the number of these is very large indeed. Begging is a regular profession carried on with marvellous skill and business acumen by many living at Jerusalem. Their appeals are sent out to all lands, and are written in most attractive and skilled terms, well calculated to touch the sympathy of tender-hearted people. A large revenue is derived by the various postal authorities of the city from the vast number of communications sent by mail. Jews and Gentiles, ecclesiastics, monks, nuns, and laymen are included among the number of



them. Even the lepers that you see begging in the streets just outside the walls for the most part prefer that kind of life to the comfort, the cleanliness, and nursing, and medical assistance they can have in the leper homes at Jerusalem.

I am often asked about the moral life of the people at Jerusalem. Among which class is it highest? Are the Christians, the Jews, the Moslems, or the Arabs most to be commended? In judging of a city in a matter of this kind, in a place so mixed in population as is Jerusalem, one has to remember several things which do not apply to all the cities in the British Isles. The different people of that so-called sacred city have different standards of morality. These vary with the various religions professed by the different races. As you must judge the Mahomedan by his own standards, and not by the Christian, so you must not judge the Arab by the standard of the Jew.

It is not easy to dogmatize on these subjects without serious risk of doing injustice to those one does not desire to misrepresent. I may, however, say that in my visits to Jerusalem, spread over twenty years down to 1911, I have seen a great improvement in many things in the city. And some day, when the Cross takes the place of the Crescent, there will be further improvements still.

In the Jerusalem of to-day the visitor will not in one month see such causes for shame as he can see in one day or in one night in almost any great city here in England. In all my visits to the city of David I have never seen *one* drunken man in the streets. On one



occasion I saw a man with his face blacked, riding on a donkey. For a few moments I thought he was drunk. A crowd was following him, and having good fun, indulging in laughing and shouting. I think the man was not drunk but playing the fool.

The men all smoke, and mostly drink coffee, and play games of one sort or another. When the sun sets the streets are deserted. It is a rare thing to see native women in the city streets at night, and one sees but few men.

Of late years concert-rooms and other places of amusement have been established in some of the houses outside the city, and near the Jaffa Gate. These places of entertainment are chiefly for natives. A few years ago a theatre, a wooden building, was erected outside the city walls. The acting was in dumb show, no words being spoken. This was probably because the men attending were of many nationalities, and no language was common to them all. The languages spoken at Jerusalem are almost as numerous as those enumerated on the day of Pentecost.

The next time I went to the city, in the following year, the theatre was gone, and I do not think anyone regretted its departure. I do not mean that Jerusalem to-day is a model of purity and goodness, but I have never seen anything there to make me think it is morally very bad.

Though Turkish government has not the reputation of being the best in the world, the Pasha, or ruler of Jerusalem, would make short work of some of the places and practices which exist in many Christian lands.

## CHAPTER VI

### PALESTINE AND THE JEWISH RACE

THE Jews, like their country, are most remarkable. No people known to us, among the populations of the globe, have such a wonderful history as the Hebrew race. Chosen of God in an especial manner, before all other people, to be the medium of His revelation to men, His own peculiar nation, they stand out in remarkable contrast to all others. Their origin, their history, their laws, their religion, their dispersion and present position in the world are all worthy of more notice than we may stop to take of them.

The origin of this people is better known than that of any other nation. The whole English-speaking peoples are better acquainted with the historic beginnings of the Jewish race than with the beginnings of their own history. Every British boy at school knows more of Abraham, of Joseph, of Moses, of King David, and of King Solomon, than he does of the first founders, law-givers, heroes, and kings of his own country. And vast numbers of other peoples into whose language the Scriptures have been translated are in the same position.

As a nation we first see the Hebrews as slaves in Egypt. Held in a bondage which was most oppressive, cruel, and merciless, they cried out in their despair, and sank disheartened in their misery. Their labour was excessive, their burdens heavy, their taskmasters harsh and oppressive, their male children sentenced to death at their birth, their hearts aching with pain, their spirits crushed, and the white-winged dove of hope departed from them.

We can trace their history farther back than this slavery, to Abraham the founder of their nation. Some three hundred years before this bondage we see that remarkable man. Called of God to wander forth to a land he knew not of, out of the heart of Asia, the birthplace and cradle of vast populations, he came forth as an ancient pilgrim father, and travelled to Palestine in which to build his altars and worship his God. There he proclaimed the idea of one God, a notion so new and strange to the world then that we know not how he got it, except by inspiration from heaven ; there he became the father of two numerous and marvellous races, the Hebrew and the Arab of the desert ; and there he received the promise for his posterity of the possession of that marvellous land of Canaan. It is to this remarkable man that three of the most powerful religions of this day look with respect and homage as in some way their ancient father—the Jewish religion, the Mahomedan religion, and the Christian religion.

Of the history of the three hundred years from Abraham to Moses we do not know much. But in that



time the Hebrew race had grown so numerous as to make its oppressors fear it, repress it, and persecute it, as we see at the opening of its dramatic history in the Book of Exodus.

Though the Book of Exodus presents the Hebrews to us as a nation of slaves, it shows us how they become a nation of free men. Moses, one of the male children condemned to death, is not only spared, but in the providence of God receives an education and training which fit him to be the leader of his people, and that training he gets at the expense of the very monarch whose power he is to break, and the flower of whose army he is to see ruined. They passed out of the land of bondage, and left it behind them for ever. Moses led them across the Red Sea, out on to the extended plains of Sinai. There, amid its wild, weird, rocky fastnesses the third month after their deliverance from bondage, he declared unto them how God had borne them on eagle wings to safety, while their enemies were destroyed; and how, if they would obey God's voice, and keep His covenant, they should be a peculiar treasure unto Him above all people, and become a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. The assembled elders and the people accepted God as the Lord and Ruler, and began their national history.

During the next forty years this emancipated people passed through a period of remarkable training and education calculated to fit their children for entering the land of promise, not only as free men, but as men understanding the value of freedom. The laws of the Constitution which they then received were among

the most remarkable ever known on earth. Not only have they influenced and guided the Jews in all their subsequent history down to to-day, but the whole history of the world has been more or less influenced by them. They lie at the foundation of many of the codes of laws of modern states, and find a place in the religious thinking and practice of millions of Christians. Whilst those laws are marvellous as read in the light which comes to modern eyes, they are far more so when read in the light of the age in which they were promulgated. They were far higher, nobler, grander than any others known in the world.

The humane constitution has been summarized as follows, says Dr. Lyman Abbot :

“ A representative government founded upon universal suffrage and sustained by the sanction of religion, the equality of all the people recognized before the law, a regularly organized judiciary, carefully contrived constitutional checks provided for the monarchy not yet established but foreseen, a system of laws, just, humane, and equally binding on all citizens, a territory divided into sovereign states, yet united in one nation, popular education provided for by the school-teacher and the prophet, freedom of speech guaranteed, yet guarded from abuse, a priesthood shorn of the powers which have ever made priestly orders dangerous to liberty, the land equally divided among all the citizens, effectually preventing a landed aristocracy, war discouraged and agriculture accepted as the basis of national industry and wealth, one God acknowledged as the Sovereign King, and, finally, these principles incorporated in a written Constitution and system of laws, carefully guarded from corruption

—these are the salient features of the Hebrew commonwealth, as framed and propounded by Moses, but under the inspiration and guidance of God.”

It may be said that the history of the Jews, God's chosen race, is the history of God's providential method of preparing the world for the coming of Christ. During the fifteen centuries which elapsed from the time of their bondage to the birth of Jesus Christ, we can see an all-wise guiding hand. All through the period of the judges, the monarchy, the division of the nation into rival kingdoms, their captivity and dispersion, their return from exile, the completion of their Temple, and loss of their political power, these all show us how they were the instruments in the hand of Providence to make the world ready for the coming of Christ, and prepare the more for His Apostles.

Their dispersion throughout the world helped to save it from complete moral and religious corruption and decay. It must be remembered that the Jews of the “dispersion”—that is, Jews living out of Palestine—for some centuries before the Christian era were far more numerous than the Jews of Palestine. It was at most only a small minority of Jews that came out of exile under Zerubbabel and Ezra. There were probably only some 50,000 of them, and those not by any means among the richest or more influential, whilst there were doubtless vast numbers of Jews scattered among all peoples throughout the world. This dispersion helped, in many places, to prepare people for the reception of the Gospel.

Their Temple at Jerusalem was a great means of



preserving the religion of Israel during the dispersion, and also helped to prepare for the coming of Christ. The Jew had his synagogues everywhere, but only at Jerusalem stood his temple. The men of other nations who had gods could carry their deities with them, but it was not so with the Jew. He had but one God, the God who made the heaven and the earth, and had delivered his fathers from bondage, and made them a great nation. He had but one temple, that at Jerusalem, in which the mystic symbol of Divine presence and glory had dwelt so long. There it was that the blood-sprinkled altar stood, on which smoked the sacrifice for Israel's sons ; there it was that the priesthood ministered daily ; there it was that incense daily ascended in a sweet cloud to symbolize the accepted prayers of God's Israel ; there it was that the High Priest once a year entered the most holy place to make solemn offering for the sins of the whole nation ; and there it was that vast throngs of Jews from all lands came up to worship the only true and living God, the God of the Hebrews. This, as nothing else could, helped to keep alive their national religion, and thus enabled them, in the midst of the gross darkness of the nations, in some measure to influence the world.

Wherever the Jew went, then as now, he carried with him his sacred book. His holy Scriptures had far more to do with preparing the world for Christ than is commonly supposed. In the third century before Christ the Old Testament, the Bible of the Jew, was translated into the Greek language, the common language not only of Jews scattered everywhere, but

of millions beside who did not belong to the Jewish nation. This translation, known as the Alexandrian Septuagint, because it was made by seventy learned men at Alexandria, had a wide circulation. It was the authorized version, the "People's Bible," in a broad and general sense.

This marvellous book exerted a remarkable influence upon the world. It did for the rank and file of the Jewish people what the circulation of the Bible in the language of the people did for the masses of England: it quickened them into a new and vigorous life. The ordinary Jew had forgotten the ancient language of his fathers, it had become a sacred tongue, a language of religion known only to the priest and the scholar. But when their Bible was put into the language which the masses of them spake, they came to the book like thirsty men come to a fountain, to drink its sweet waters. By their own firesides they were able to read the narratives of the founders of their nation, of David and of Solomon. They caught much of the rapture and joyfulness of the Psalms, and were thrilled and stirred by their sacred history. The prophecies of Isaiah and others awakened anew within them the hopes of a coming day of glory for their nation, when the Messiah should come. They learned how their fathers had triumphed under all circumstances and lived through all persecutions and troubles. And all these gave them a confidence which no depression or sorrow could remove.

The effect of this book on others beside the Jews of Palestine and the dispersion was considerable. The

ancient traditions of many nations reveal such a similarity to many things contained in the Book of Genesis that the conclusion has been reached that such light as these nations possess came at first from the Jewish Scriptures and tradition. The wide circulation of the Jewish Bible in the three centuries before the Christian era produced a marked effect in many directions. At the time when Jesus Christ was born at Bethlehem, the peoples of many lands seem to have had the idea that a great prince, or king, or ruler was to make his appearance ; the wise men of the East came saying : “Where is He that is born King of the Jews ? for we have seen His star, and are come to worship Him.” If they had not obtained this knowledge of the coming King from the Jewish Scriptures, where did they get it ? Whilst the Jews were, in no small sense, a people made ready for the coming of the Lord, they did much to prepare the world for the reception of the Message of the Gospel of the Kingdom.

Having now glanced rapidly at the Jewish nation who peopled Jerusalem in those far-off days, it may interest you to know how Jerusalem is peopled to-day.

I will make no attempt to give many figures, as I might easily fall into error, as David did in ancient times. You must remember that the Holy Land is under Turkish government, and the Turk does not take a census of his subjects, though he has the reputation of taking their money in taxes. I must, however, mention some few figures. In a former chapter I have said that Jerusalem is composed of four hills called Mounts. Its population, also, is divided into



four nationalities. You must keep in mind that the greater part, the cleaner, and sweeter, and richer part of Jerusalem is outside the walls. Every year adds to the number of houses erected in the districts around and about the ancient city.

Inside the city walls there is the Jewish Quarter, which is easily recognized by the pilgrim who walks about the streets of the city. There may be about 40,000 or more Jews in the Holy City. There are many sections and nationalities among them. They are described as of various origin and extraction—Spanish, Russian, German, Polish, Jews also from Turkistan, Persia, Damascus, and Bagdad. The number of Jews at Jerusalem and in the Holy Land is increasing.

Then there is the Christian Quarter. Among these must be classed Greeks, Latins, Armenians, Copts, Protestants. Of these the Greeks appear to be the most numerous. The Protestants at Jerusalem are but small in numbers compared with some of the others, but they have considerable influence.

The Armenian Quarter is also pointed out, and the fourth quarter is known as the Moslem District. There may be, and there probably is, a larger number of the followers of Mahomet at Jerusalem than of the followers of Jesus. They are chiefly what are called the natives, though there are among them Africans, and people of other nations.

I should imagine that the whole population of Jerusalem cannot be much less than 80,000 souls, of which I am told there are at least 12,000 Moslems.

I know no city, and have never heard of a city, whose peoples were so mixed as to race, religion, and prejudice. Though monasteries and churches abound to an extent that cannot be equalled in any place on earth, I should not say that you must look to these people as the best examples of real, practical religion. Church bells scarcely ever cease tolling, either day or night, and worship, such as it is, goes constantly on, but I sometimes think that it might be better for Jerusalem, and better for religion itself, if those who profess it in the Holy City manifested more of that spirit of brotherhood which enables men to live together in peace.

This division of the people into four general classes applies only to Jerusalem inside the city walls ; outside the walls it would be more difficult to classify the people. I should say that many of those who live on the charity of their co-religionists resident in all other parts of the world live mostly inside the city. The poverty of the people, of which there is much in the Holy City, appeals to people elsewhere. It moves them to pity and liberality, and is, of course, one of the best assets the idlers have, of whom there are not a few.

The idlers are by no means confined to the poor. It would be interesting to know how many priests, and monks, and nuns, and brothers, and clergy, and other religious officials there are in this one small city. I have read that in the city of Rome there is a priest for every eight families. But in Jerusalem the proportion must be far larger than this when applied to the resident population. All these dark-robed officers

of the religious army have to live, and judging by the appearance of many of them they live well, for they seem to be well fed, nicely clothed, and to have a good time of it. It is utterly impossible for these all to get their support from the people resident in this remarkable city.

They exist largely on the gifts of their co-religionists of other lands. A great trade is driven by these people among the tens of thousands of pilgrims who annually visit the Holy City. Whether they are rich or poor, they must not, and they do not, come empty-handed. The poorest of these pilgrims, I am told, make their offerings at the sacred shrines. All these gifts pass into the coffers from which the officials get their support. It would be better for Jerusalem, better for the pilgrims, better for the residents, better for the tradespeople, if at least three-fifths of the priests could be turned out of Jerusalem, and set to do some honest work to enrich the country. They spend their lives in what is useless, and makes neither themselves nor anybody else happier or better. I am no enemy of religion, but a firm friend and supporter. If I were not, what I have seen of the way these men gabble through their services, and of the way the men of one sect hate the men of another, would help to drive me into irreligion.

Some of the religious denominations are very rich. The Greek sect owns large tracts of land, many buildings, and much property, all the gifts of pious supporters, and the offerings of the pilgrims, rich and poor.



## CHAPTER VII

### JERUSALEM IN THE DAYS OF JESUS

I WANT you now to try and see Jerusalem as it was in the year A.D. 30. If we can think ourselves back to the city in that first century of the Christian era, we may be interested to see the city as it then was.

You ask me if this can be done ? Can we in this twentieth century get a glimpse of that city as it was in the first ? Can we repeople its streets, and get an idea of the life of Jerusalem as it was then ?

I think we can. We may, in part at least, unearth the buried city, and, clearing it of the rubbish of centuries, get some glimpses of its life as it was when Jesus of Nazareth was in the Holy City. It will not be without interest to those who like to read about the land of Canaan to learn of its political, social, and religious condition nineteen hundred years ago.

Let us, then, enter the city by its narrow gateway, as it was of old. Inside the city we may thread our way through the busy hurrying crowds, visit its bazaars and other marts of trade, and see its business done.

The ancient city was probably twice the size of the

city of to-day—its streets much wider, its buildings much better, and the general appearance altogether superior to the modern Jerusalem. Here are pleasant gardens and open spaces ; there you see the jewellers, goldsmiths, and dealers in precious stones in one of its bazaars. In another you can purchase the richest silk, and the finest linen from the looms of Damascus. The dyer is at work in one quarter producing that most beautiful and costly “purple” of which the wealthy of those days were so fond, and in which they were pleased to array themselves.

In the leather market you can see the sandals and fine coloured shoes exhibited in shop after shop. In various quiet corners you will notice the public letter-writer plying his occupation as his customer dictates to him the epistle he desires to send to some distant place. Yonder you hear the sound of the pipe, to the music of which the children are dancing in the market-place. There are the unemployed, at the appointed place, waiting to be hired, their various occupations indicated by the articles they carry. The gardener who waits for work in the vineyard carries his gardener's tools ; the porter, accustomed to carry great loads of furniture or other goods, has across his shoulders the ropes with which he binds his burdens ; the carpenter can easily be recognized by those who want the service of such workmen by the saw and the rule he has with him ; while various other craftsmen can be noted by the implements of their respective occupations.

There you see the merchantmen who have come to the ancient exchange. One has sought and found the

goodly pearl he now wishes to barter for other goods. Another offers for sale or exchange the produce of his cornfield, and exhibits specimens of the grain. And there you see the eunuch from the Palace purchasing the supplies for household use.

You will no doubt notice that the population of this ancient Jerusalem was vastly greater than it is now. All ancient records tell us this. Josephus says that at the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, about forty years later than the time we have named, a million people perished in the terrible sack of the city. The people in Jerusalem, then, would be greatly increased in number by those who fled into it from the surrounding country, in hope of such security as it might afford. But if we largely discount these figures of the former writers, there will still be left a very large population, fixed by some historians at about 250,000 souls.

Into this ancient Jerusalem there poured all the wealth and merchandise of the farther East. It was the great centre of trade and commerce. It was the London, Paris, Berlin, or New York of those times. Those engaged in the service of the Temple alone, including priests, and all other officials and servants, were almost as numerous as the whole of the population resident in the Jerusalem of the twentieth century.

And the ancient city, like these modern capitals, had its palaces, gardens, and richer quarter. Standing in the Valley of the Cheesemongers, we get a fine view of the best and most attractive parts of the city as it was in the days when it was adorned with the best specimens



of the architect's skill, and filled with palaces and riches. As we look up on either side of us the eye is charmed. In this valley, as it then was, we are between the western and eastern hills, Zion and Moriah. Across this valley was the fine viaduct which connected the two hills, and made a level pathway from one to the other. If we turn our gaze westward, towards Zion, we see the terraces rising one above the other, with the dwellings of the rich here and there making a beautiful and attractive picture. On the upper part of Zion is the upper city, known as the City of David. Among the buildings of Zion stand the three great towers which Herod built. Of these the one at the extreme north-west corner, called Hippicus, is the greatest and most imposing. Composed of great, almost square, blocks of grey rock rising to a height of 120 feet, it has a most impressive appearance. Around the uppermost of its several stories you will see battlements and turrets. The foundations of this tower still remain in the modern city.

Turning your gaze now eastward, you see Mount Moriah, crowned with the many and beautiful buildings of the Temple, upon which the workmen of Herod spent forty years of labour. On the slopes of this hill, on the western side, you may see the residences of some of the priests of the Temple and other officials. Extend your gaze beyond the beautiful colonnades of the Temple, and farther eastward you may catch a view of the Mount of Olives, at the foot of which are the King's gardens, Siloam, and the Garden of Gethsemane.

Now look to the north-west and north-east, and you

see the public offices, and the important business parts of the city, at the north-east the Pool of Bethesda, and not a few other important buildings.

Such was the city as it was in the first century of our era.

The political, social, and moral condition of that ancient city were very different from these at present.

Politically it cannot be considered, even by its ablest apologists, as then in a satisfactory condition. Its brave sons, through many ages before the date we are considering, had fought bravely for its rights that its citizens might be free men. But in the year A.D. 30 it was ruled by a foreign power. "The sceptre had departed from Judah, and the law-giver from between his feet." No longer was there one of the royal line upon its throne. No longer did the men of that household sit in its chief places. The Roman had his nominee in the city to govern and rule its people. The banners and other emblems of the Roman authority were seen almost everywhere. The eagle spread its wings over the gates of the city, and we are told that Herod had even placed a golden eagle over the Temple itself. This was an act of sacrilege which no devout Jew could ever forgive. It cannot be wondered that there were riots, outrages, and much weariness and restlessness in the city and around it.

Crowds of alien soldiers, drafted into Jerusalem, were needed to quell rebellion, and to try to secure peace. Foreigners occupied the seats of the judges, and without the presence of the foreign military their judgments

and commands could not be enforced. Into the city, attracted by its many charms, and drawn thither by the aliens who ruled, were large numbers of foreigners and heathen, hated by the natives of the city itself. With this great inflow of the men of other nationalities, both civil and military, there came practices, and sports, and pleasures, which were detested by the Jews. There were the theatre, Roman games, and gladiatorial shows, in which, we are told, men and beasts fought together. Not only was all this hateful to the Jews ; it outraged their religious feelings, shocked their sense of what was right, and goaded them into rebellion. Secret societies were formed, disturbances and disorders were ever occurring, and the outraged population could only be held in check by the power of the sword.

The social condition of ancient Jerusalem was vastly different from that of the earlier centuries. In eastern cities to-day you can always see the extremes of wealth and want. In modern Jerusalem itself it exists to a very noticeable extent. In the Holy City in the first Christian century it was the same. Articles of luxury, such as the wealthy classes consumed and used, were costly. But this mattered not to them. "They clothed themselves in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day." Their tables groaned beneath the weight of the luxuries brought from many lands. The choicest meats, rarest wines, and most luscious fruits were piled there.

At the other extreme were the toiling poor—very poor, always poor—with no opportunity ever to be anything else. Happily, the wants of these were few ;





*Photo. by American Colony, Jerusalem.*

RAMLEH, THE ANCIENT ARIMATHAEA.



*Photo. by American Colony, Jerusalem.*

THE TRAVELLER'S FIRST VIEW OF JERUSALEM AS SEEN FROM THE  
BETHLEHEM ROAD.





their food, coarse and rough, was cheap. In such lands life is not difficult to sustain. Corn, fruit, oil, and wine were all cheap, and these formed the staple food of the poor.

The moral condition of Jerusalem was far from good. Between the reigns of David and Herod the Holy City had often sunk very low. Under some of its kings not only had religion—the religion of Abraham and Moses—been proscribed, and heathenism set up, but all appearance of righteousness was banished. To gratify the vice and sin of the monarchs and their courts, the sense of morality was set aside, and those who preached it were ridiculed, dispersed, imprisoned, banished, or killed. Though Jerusalem was the centre of the religion of the Jews, it may almost be said to have been on many occasions the centre of iniquity. Its religious life had hardened into forms and ceremonies, and had largely lost that gentle spirit of love which all religions should cultivate. Even the priests had become depraved and corrupt, caring more for the fleece than for the flock. The courts of the Temple were thronged with traders and money-changers. In its precincts, the lowing of cattle, the chink of money, and the bleating of sheep were heard where only the voice of prayer and praise should resound. To sum up, the rich were luxurious and self-indulgent, the Government was corrupt, the Temple was profaned, the poor were ignorant, and the priests worldly and wicked.

If you are not too anxious to get to the sacred places of Jerusalem, I should like, in a few sentences, to tell



you something about the religious sects and parties as we know of them in that year, A.D. 30.

These parties may be classed under three heads : the *Pharisees*, the *Sadducees*, and the *Essenes*. The names of the two former classes are familiar to those of you who read the New Testament, the name of the latter never appears in that book.

The Pharisees may be called the “ritualists,” the “ceremonialists” of the day ; the Sadducees may be styled the “rationalistic latitudinarians” of the time ; whilst the Essenes, of whom we know so little, and who were a much smaller party than either of the others, represent the mystical, ascetical, contemplative party.

There are other classifications of these parties, but I need only deal with the three. Dr. Lyman Abbot says :

“The Pharisees have been styled ‘the popular and democratic party,’ whilst the Sadducees were regarded as the ‘conservative and autocratic party.’ The former represented a finer and more individualistic movement, but the latter the hereditary and sacerdotal tendency. The Pharisees constituted a school or society where the condition of membership was intellectual ; but the Sadducees constituted a party where the condition of membership was descent. The former was an association of the like-minded, but the latter a cluster of priestly and governing families.”

The representatives of the Pharisees often came into conflict with Jesus of Nazareth, and called forth from Him some of the most severe words He ever uttered. These were the men He called hypocrites, and against

whom He especially warned His disciples and followers. He declared that their prayers were a pretence. He said their gifts were not expressions of real charity, but were made to secure popular applause. He even charged them with devouring widows' houses, and thus living at the expense of the poor.

Though in the days of Jesus they were both numerous and influential, they were not, by any means, an old party. They sprang up, say, in the second century before Christ. Their intense passion for their nation, their learning, their alms, and devotion to strict religious observances, won for them the favour of the people. Their theological views included many which have come down to us. They believed in immortality, the resurrection of the body, angels and demons, heaven and hell.

It must not for one moment be supposed that they were all bad ; perhaps not many of them were. Among them were some whom we know as great and good men—Hillel, Zacharias, Gamaliel, and St. Paul. That good old man was of this party who took the infant Jesus in his arms in the Temple, and exclaimed : “ Now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation.” A system which could and did produce such men was not bad, notwithstanding the formalities and insincerities of some of its professors.

The second great party, the Sadducees, occupied an important place in Jewish history, religion, and politics in the days of Jesus. They did not hesitate to make vigorous attacks upon some of the most

cherished notions of the Pharisees ; they repeated the authority of their tradition, declared the Old Testament to be sufficient, urged the people to return to the old Jewish leading and doctrine, and often cried out for morality instead of ritual.

But whilst doing this, there is not much evidence that they possessed what we should call any warm and deep principle of vital religion. They denied the resurrection, personal immortality, and retribution in a future state. They also denied the existence of angels and spirits. They upheld the freedom of the human will, and, maintaining that good and evil are the free choice of man, and that he can do either as he may please, they did not feel any special need of an over-ruling Divine providence.

They were not by any means a popular party in the Jewish Church at Jerusalem. They were, upon the whole, more powerful than influential. They had a passion for freedom, and illustrated the growing spirit of revolt against the ceremonial slavery of their times. They were too cold, too sceptical, too proud to win and lead the masses, or to become powerful representatives of popular beliefs. Their lack of sympathy with the people made this impossible, for their pride of place and spirit set up great barriers between them and the people.

The third sect, or party, were known as Essenes. These are nowhere mentioned in the New Testament, though some have thought that traces of their influence can be found in that book.

In numbers they were greatly inferior to the



Pharisees, as also in influence. They were the most peculiar of all the religious parties of that first century. Inclined as they were to mysticism, they formed in some sense a kind of connecting link between Judaism and those Oriental notions which shortly afterwards seemed to fill the atmosphere of Asia, and is seen a little later, under the name of Gnosticism, in early Christianity.

Theirs was a religion which led them, like more recent monastic Orders, to withdraw largely from the noise and bustle of the crowd. The national religion, with its pomp, had but little attraction for men of this type, who sought to live the contemplative life, which in many respects has the appearance of intense selfishness. They do not seem to have had much idea of saving the world by sharing its work, its worries, its burdens, and its joys. They preferred to leave it to take its course, while they themselves tried to crucify the flesh by subduing all natural feelings and aspirations.

We are told that they sought to abolish all sacrifice of blood with which the Jewish Temple reeked. They tried to do away with all distinction of rank, and only admitted to their society men who were willing to adopt their strict and severe mode of life. They condemned marriage, and did not practise it themselves ; their teaching was a strict morality, which they themselves tried to practise. They accepted the laws of Moses, but rejected the prophets. They vigorously disapproved of all those pleasures which most men love. They were the Puritans of that first Christian

century. They despised wealth, and practised a community of goods, thus having all things in common. There was, therefore, no distinction of rich and poor among them. Josephus tells us of their white dress, their labours, their prayers, and their generosity to one another. They visited the sick, were kind to the poor, and upon the whole lived a life of self-denial, of labour, of poverty, and of piety.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE CERTAINTIES AND UNCERTAINTIES OF THE HOLY LAND

I HAVE often been asked if there is anything left in the Holy Land upon which Jesus looked. Can we be sure about any of the famous places we visit that they date back to the first century of the Christian era? Is there, either in Jerusalem or anywhere else in the whole of Palestine, one simple building that was there nineteen hundred years ago? Is it possible for any pilgrim in the Holy Land to return home, certain that he has put his feet on ground trod by the Great Teacher?

It seems quite natural to ask these questions; I asked them myself many years ago, and I dare say thousands of others will ask them in days that are to come. Yes, there are many things that can be seen, and that we shall see in our pilgrimage, that Jesus saw. I hope to describe to you many of the places on which He must have gazed, and over which He walked. I do not know, however, of one building that remains to-day that stood in that far-off first century. I am not aware that anyone, who can speak with authority, has ever told us of a single complete erection that Jesus looked at or visited, that we can look at and visit. But we can, I think, be sure about many



sites, and not a few remnants of buildings which He must have seen.

In this short chapter I will tell you of some of the certainties and uncertainties of the Holy Land. I shall do little more at this point than name them, for I shall describe many of them at length as we visit them. I take first the certainties.

Here, at Jerusalem, it is agreed that the Temple area, where once stood the Temple, built and beautified and dedicated by King Solomon, and the foundation-stones of the great building known as the Tower of David, in the north-west of the city, and near the Jaffa Gate, are undoubtedly of that ancient period. While no man can say with certainty just how the walls of Jerusalem ran in the days of Jesus, the course of some parts thereof may be defined.

Jesus must have seen many of the hills which are round about Jerusalem, and often walked on some of them. We know that He sat on the Mount of Olives, and taught whilst there. He must have crossed the plains of Jericho, and seen the Dead Sea. We are certain that He came to the Jordan, for He was baptized in its waters. The Judean Hills, the Wilderness of Judea, He knew, and experienced His temptation there. We know that He sailed over the waters of the Lake of Galilee and visited Capernaum. He walked over the great and interesting fields which lie between Tiberias and Cana of Galilee. He lived long at Nazareth, and must often have rambled over the hills about it.

All these are still there, and many more beside. In

spite of all the uncertainties, and the unreliable traditions connected with many places, there is much that is genuine and may be relied upon. I know that the priests have manufactured many so-called sacred places at which the man who is well informed can only smile. They have given us two Gardens of Gethsemane, two places of the Cross, beside many other impossible sites, which cannot all be right. There is still, however, enough left of the genuine and certain to fire the imagination and thrill the soul of the Christian pilgrim.

For myself, long study and reading have led me to believe in the genuineness and certainty of many places not enumerated in the above list, about which I shall have much to tell you before we finish our pilgrimage. Among these I put the place of the Last Supper, the Pool of Siloam, the Kidron Valley, the place of the Cross, the Virgin's fountain at Nazareth, the synagogue in which Jesus declared Himself to be the Messiah, the white synagogue at Capernaum, and the Jewish wailing-place.

Among the uncertainties—that is, the places and things about which there is doubt and always must be, at any rate, until more light is given than we at present possess—many are places that we should like to know more about. I do not think that we know, or ever shall know, the exact course which the ancient walls of the city of Jerusalem took. We may draw sketches of the first and most ancient walls, then of the second walls, and also the third; but who can assert, without fear of being specially questioned and

criticized, that he knows the actual lines of the ancient walls? My own belief is, that there were walls of defence before any one of the three walls commonly named by historians was erected at all. It may have been that the people who lived around each part of the four-hilled city had built walls around each part they inhabited. Later, a wall was erected which enclosed some of these earlier defences.

About the present walls of the city of Jerusalem at least three things are quite certain. First, that they do not by any means enclose the whole area which formerly composed part of the ancient city. Few people doubt this. Secondly, that the present walls are quite modern. Their average height is said to be about thirty-five feet. There are about thirty-four towers at different parts of the walls. There are in these walls eight gates known by the English names of the Jaffa Gate, New Gate, Damascus Gate, Herod's Gate, St. Stephen's Gate, Dung Gate, Zion Gate, and the Golden Gate. This last, the Golden Gate, is closed, and the Moslems have a tradition that when this gate is opened Mahomet will lose his power at Jerusalem. The distance to walk around the walls is a little over two miles.

It is uncertain if anyone knows, or ever will know, the exact site of the grave of Jesus. Around this subject there has been long and continuous discussion, and it still goes on. Some think that the great Church of the Holy Sepulchre contains the true site. Others are inclined to what is known as Gordon's Calvary, the garden tomb. Just as the grave of Moses is unknown,



so is the grave of Jesus ; and perhaps this is a providential arrangement. If we knew the actual place, it would add to our superstitious reverence, and that is already large enough.

If from Jerusalem we pass to other places, we again come face to face with uncertainty. Which of us would not like to know the actual site of the house where those two remarkable women, Martha and Mary, lived ? Who would not wish to hear where is, or was, the tomb out of which Jesus called Lazarus, the brother of these women ? We shall pass through the village of Bethany, and as we do so we shall see the modern house of Simon the leper, the man whom some have supposed to be the husband of Martha.

I suppose there is not one of us but would like to be sure of the cornfield in which Jesus walked when His hungry disciples plucked the ears of corn. Not a few Christians would like to see the very place where Jesus fed the multitudes with the five loaves and two fishes. And I am quite certain we should all like to sit on the hillside where the great Teacher sat with His disciples about Him, when He delivered that wonderful discourse we know as the Sermon on the Mount.

These, and many more places, we cannot know. Time has wiped out the certainty of the spots ; but the country is there. The districts exist. Neither tradition nor the lapse of time has much changed these. Men cannot take away the mountains, nor put the lake in some other place. There they remain ; and it is to see them, in fact or imagination, that I intend to take you.

## CHAPTER IX

### MOUNT ZION AND THE WAILING-PLACE

WE must now begin our pilgrimage to the sacred places of Jerusalem. I will only take you to a few of the more remarkable and striking. To attempt to see all the places to which tradition and the interested parties have attached various stories would be to exhaust your patience and tire you out both in body and mind.

I must take you first to Mount Zion. The Psalmist told the people of his day to "walk about Zion, and go round about her : tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces ; that ye may tell it to the generation following" (Ps. xlviii. 12-13).

When the writer of these stirring words was alive Zion was a beautiful spot. It was the highest point of the city, as David knew it, and it was 2,540 feet above the level of the Mediterranean Sea. After David and his men had possessed themselves of the fortified stronghold, he built many houses on Zion. It was here, too, that he prepared a place for the Ark of God, that sacred treasure of the Israelites. Having erected a tent to receive the Ark, he had it brought to Zion.

I have sometimes wondered if the Twenty-fourth Psalm was a kind of sacred litany, chanted by the people as they carried the Ark to Zion. It is easy to imagine the priests chanting :

“Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord ? or who shall stand in His holy place ?”

Then comes the answer :

“He that hath clean hands and a pure heart ; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation.”

When the Ark had reached Zion there was a great religious festival in which there was eating and drinking and rejoicing. At that service David delivered the Psalm, which is number one hundred and five in our collection, and which begins with these words :

“Give thanks unto the Lord ; call upon His name, make known His deeds among the people” (*see* 1 Chron. xvi.).

Zion Street, as it is now called, runs right over Zion from David Street to Zion Gate. At the corner of this street, where it starts from David Street, is the citadel. This is a great building now used as barracks for Turkish soldiers. It is known that Herod erected a great palace, distinguished by three Towers, called Thasælus, Hippicus, and Mariamne. This tower of David in its upper part has been rebuilt ; but it is generally agreed that the lower portions are very ancient, are composed of Roman masonry, and go



right back to the times of the New Testament. Doubtless, Jesus would often pass by and look at the building which stood there.

When I first visited Jerusalem there was a deep ditch or moat on two of the sides of this tower, and the ancient masonry was, of course, visible. Since then the moat has been filled up to the level of the street. In these days the levelled space is used as a sort of market, to which the Bethlehem women bring their vegetables for sale.

Right opposite the side of this tower, which faces the north, are some shops, over which is the grand New Hotel, which a tradition says stands on the site of the spot at which Bathsheba was bathing when David saw her (*see* 2 Sam. xi.). Though we have no certain knowledge that David had any connection with this great tower which bears his name, it may be possible that here in earlier times than Herod's he had his palace.

As we pass up Zion Street, just a few yards on the left, there stands the Protestant building known as Christ Church, connected with the London Jews Society. On my first visit to Jerusalem, twenty years ago, I attended a service in this church on a Sunday evening. That service impressed itself upon me. It was a Protestant service in an Episcopal building, on Mount Zion. The clergyman was a native of the country, and preached in English, and his subject was a defence of the English Prayer-Book. There is every probability that the land on which that church stands, and much of that which adjoins it, would be the

garden connected with Herod's palace, which is opposite to it.

A little farther along, and still on the left hand side, we reach the great and beautiful Armenian Convent, known as the Church of St. James. Tradition says that this church is on the spot where James, the brother of John, was beheaded. The only reason I can think of which may have led to the tradition is the close proximity of this site to the castle of Herod. It may have been that there were prison cells in the lower parts of that great palace. If so, it is possible that Peter, as well as James, may have been immured in one of them, from which he was miraculously delivered by the angel, as described in the twelfth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles.

However much (or however little) truth there may be in these traditions, there will be no doubt in the mind of anyone who sees it that, when I describe this church as beautiful, I do not use exaggerated language.

The decorations of the building, and its quaint pictures, will greatly interest the visitor who, for the first time, looks into an important Armenian church.

There is here a shrine, known as the Shrine of St. James, and they say that the head of that Apostle was buried there. In my notes written in that church when I first visited it, twenty years ago, I find these words : "In one of the chapels there are three stones. One is from the Jordan, another from Mount Sinai, and another from Mount Tabor. These are sacred places to the Armenians, and those who can afford go to these districts as a religious duty ; but those who

cannot visit them come here and kiss these stones, and that does instead !”

As we continue our journey along this street we soon reach and pass through the Zion Gate. We make our way to the reputed tomb of David. This building has attractions both for Moslems and Christians. The former are in possession of the building, and the latter like to visit it. It is a two-storied building. Here, it is said, the body of David, King of the country, was buried, and here, too, tradition puts the place of the Last Supper.

We know that David was buried in the Holy City, and other kings after him as well ; but where the precise spot is no one can say with certainty.

This building is carefully guarded by the Moslems. The large room of this place is said to be that in which the Last Supper was held. It is a very plain and not over clean room, about fifty feet long and thirty feet wide, divided in the centre by two columns.

A Christian church was known to be here which dated back to the twelfth century, and that took the place of an earlier one, which some assert existed in the second century. If this could be well authenticated there might not be much doubt left as to it being a genuine place of the days of Jesus.

It may well have been here that Mary, the mother of John Mark, lived, to whose door Peter came on the night he was delivered from prison. It was in that house that the Christians were met to pray for the release of Peter. So to that house, no doubt the disciples of Jesus, and perhaps He Himself, often came



for hospitality and shelter. And why should not this have been the very house to which the rich ruler, Nicodemus, came by night to see Jesus ?

There is something suggestive and deeply interesting in the thought that this building, called the "cœnaculum," or place of the Last Supper, may be on the actual site of the house in which that great ordinance of the Lord's Supper was instituted. You can hardly wonder that thousands visit the spot. You will not be surprised to learn that tens of thousands of Christians of all denominations, many of them resident at Jerusalem, reverently worship in this building, and that it should be spoken of as the building in which the little Christian Church was assembled on that first day of Pentecost so long ago, when the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples.

We will re-enter the city by the Zion Gate and leave Mount Zion behind us for a while at least. In leaving it I need only say that it would be wearisome to enter upon a discussion as to whether the district from which we now turn is Zion, or whether it was in some other part of the city. I have read what I believe to be the last discussion upon the subject, and still hold to the traditional site.

It is not a great way from the Zion Gate to the Valley of the Cheesemongers, on the western side of the Temple area. On our way we get a fine view from one point of several very interesting spots.

Yonder, across the Vale of Jehoshaphat and the Kidron, we see the Mount of Olives. There, too, we gaze down the Valley of Hinnom, and see the village

of Siloam, and the Hill of Evil Counsel. Siloam, too, is down there, and the reputed site of the tower which fell and killed several people. But as we shall learn more about some of these places later, we pass on now to the Jewish wailing-place.

At the Jewish wailing-place we have what I conceive to be one of the most pathetic and touching sights in the world. At this particular spot, on Friday and on Saturday mornings, large numbers of members of the Jewish race congregate for worship, some to weep, and others to wail and mourn.

The place and the circumstances which lead to this are worthy of note.

When the engineers employed by King Solomon to build the great Temple of the Jews began their work, they had not only to erect the structure, but practically to make the ground on which to build it. Mount Moriah, around the peak of which the Temple proper stood, was a point of rock, the sides of which dipped down to the valley on all sides. In order to get a great level area, on which not only to put the Holy House itself, but all the various buildings which surrounded the courtyard, they had to construct great walls of stone from the valleys to a height equal to the pointed rock. Having done this, the spaces had to be filled in, thus creating the area of many acres in extent.

The Temple built by Solomon, rebuilt on the return from captivity, and enlarged by Herod, has long ago perished; not one stone of it is left upon another. Curiously enough, part of one of the great walls which

supported the heavy structures above remains to this day. On the western side of the Temple space there is a huge mass of masonry, which, from the valley below, rises up to a great height. This wall is composed of great blocks of stone. Some half-dozen courses of this wall, in the lower part, consist of stones measuring about fifteen feet long, and are probably over three feet in height. There is little doubt that the style and working of many of these stones belongs to a most ancient period. In the higher portions there are smaller blocks, some of which are said to be the work of an Arab period.

Out of the crevices of this wall there are various kinds of plants, flowers, and creepers growing. It is to the foot of this wall that the Jews come to weep and wail and worship.

And there they come, generation after generation, not only the Jews of Jerusalem, of whom there are many, but those from many and distant lands. To visit this place on an ordinary Friday is impressive, but to be there on a Jewish festival is an experience never to be forgotten. There they are—old men rapidly going down the hill of life, and young men with all their life before them! Women, too, are there, of all ages. The costumes of many nations may be seen on these special occasions, and evidently people who live in various grades of society—rich and poor—mingle together in one mass.

Not a few of them, as they sway from side to side, hold devotional books in their hands, from which they appear to be reading. Sometimes they chant from



Psalm LXXIX., in which such words as the following occur, and might almost seem to have been specially written for these people on these occasions :

“ O God, the heathen are come into Thine inheritance ; Thy Holy Temple have they defiled ; they have laid Jerusalem on heaps. . . .

“ We are become a reproach to our neighbours, a scorn and derision to them that are round about us.

“ How long, Lord ? wilt Thou be angry for ever ? shall Thy jealousy burn like fire ? . . .

“ O remember not against us former iniquities : let Thy tender mercies speedily prevent us : for we are brought very low. . . .

“ Wherefore should the heathen say, Where is their God ? let Him be known among the heathen in our sight by the revenging of the blood of Thy servants which is shed. . . .

“ So we Thy people and sheep of Thy pasture will give Thee thanks for ever : we will show forth Thy praise to all generations.”

Sometimes they chant a litany, which is most appropriate for them to use at this place. It is said to be chanted by priests and people, and is in some such language as the following :

“ Because of the place which is deserted, we sit alone and weep.

“ Because of the Temple which is destroyed,

“ Because of the walls which are broken down,

“ Because of our greatness which is departed,

“ Because of the precious stones of the Temple ground to powder,

“ Because of our priests who have erred and gone astray.

“ Because of our Kings who have contemned God,  
“ We sit alone and weep.”

I have seen Christians who have visited this spot and have gone away laughing at it all. It is a sight for tears rather than laughter. Here are people, representatives of a great race, who have given to the world the greatest collection of religious and spiritual poems which ever came from the mind of man. Once they were the chosen and peculiar people of God, inhabiting what men, by common consent, called the Holy Land. Now they are homeless, scattered to the ends of the earth, with no land to call their own. Well may they weep and wail ! Well may they bemoan that their beautiful house is destroyed, their city broken up, their country in the hands of the heathen, and they themselves exiles and wanderers !

## CHAPTER X

### THE TEMPLE AND THE MOSQUE OF OMAR

THE Temple of the Jews at Jerusalem was their one great religious centre. From the time it was first erected, to take the place of the Tabernacle of the wilderness, to its final destruction by the Romans, it was their most sacred place. Thoughts of it entered into the daily life of every Jew wherever in the wide world he might find himself. Social condition made no difference in this respect, for however highly exalted he might be, or however lowly, he never forgot the sacred city, and the fires of his love for it were lit at the sacred altar of the Temple. In his daily prayers he ever turned his face towards it in holy reverence and lowly love. On the head-dress of the High Priest of his religion were written the words, "Holiness to the Lord"; but it may be said that the Holy Temple, the House of the Lord, was engraven on the heart of every Jew. Wherever men of the Jewish nation were found, the Temple at Jerusalem was the one bond of brotherhood that they never ignored.

From every land the Jew came to it on great festive occasions. Just as the Moslem in these days makes it the one object of his life to visit the shrine of his sacred



prophet at Mecca, so the Jew came to the city of God to worship the God of his fathers at the holy place on Mount Moriah. He crossed rivers, seas, and continents that he might look upon its sacred walls and holy altars. Out of his wealth he enriched it, and out of his poverty he contributed to it, and never felt any gift to it to be a sacrifice, but rather an act of devotion.

It was the one desire of his heart that it should be preserved, maintained, and saved from any act of profanity. The Jew would submit to almost any loss or indignity, either to himself or to his country, if the Temple could be kept free from what he considered to be any unholy interference with it. When strange rulers held sway over his country, and the House of David was occupied by the conqueror, he submitted as best he could. But when any insult was even threatened against the most holy place, the whole Jewish race thrilled with anger and indignation. It was only necessary to raise the cry that the Temple was in danger to rouse the Hebrew to prayer, and inspire him to grasp his weapon and sacrifice every drop of his blood in its defence.

Large numbers of books have been written about the Temple. Most, if not all, of those who have described the building and its courts have based their works upon the writings of Josephus, from whose history a few words may be quoted here.

“The Temple was built of stones that were white and strong, and each in length was twenty-five cubits, their height was eight and their breadth about twelve ; and the whole structure, as also the structure of the royal

cloister, was each side much lower, but the middle was much higher, till they were visible to those that dwelt in the country for a great many furlongs, but chiefly to such as lived over against them, and those that approached to them. The Temple also had doors at the entrance, and lintels over them, of the same height with the Temple itself. They were adorned with embroidered veils, with their flowers of purple, and pillars interwoven ; and over these, but under the crown-work, was spread out a golden vine, with its branches hanging down from a great height. The largeness and fine workmanship was a surprising sight to the operators, to see what vast material there were, and with what great skill the workmanship was done. He [Herod] also encompassed the entire Temple with very large cloisters, contriving them to be in due proportion thereto ; and he laid out larger sums of money upon them than had been done before him, till it seemed that no one else had so greatly adorned the Temple as he had done. There was a large wall to both the cloisters, which wall was itself the most prodigious work that was ever heard of the man.”\*

The above description is of the Temple as Herod rebuilt and enlarged it. If you look at 1 Chron. xxii. you will see what huge quantities of material and money King David prepared for the first Temple which Solomon, his son, erected. “Stone, and brass, and iron, and timber, and workmen in abundance. A hundred thousand talents of gold, and a thousand thousand talents of silver, and of the gold, the silver, and the brass, and the iron, there is no number.”

\* “Antiquities,” XV. xi., etc.

It is well that we should, if possible, bear in mind a general outline of what the Temple was like in the last years of its existence. Beecher has told us that "the Temple was at once the brain and heart of the nation. It was the University and chief house of the learned men and priests, and gave to Palestine a centre of orthodoxy. Through the Temple circulated the whole people in its great annual visitation, and then, like blood that has been aerated, it carried back new life to every extremity of the land.

"We should dismiss from our minds all preconceptions of the appearance of the renowned Temple, whether based upon classic temples or upon modern cathedrals or churches. It resembled none of them, but stood by itself, without parallel or likeness either in structure or method, as it certainly stood alone among all temples in its wonderful uses. It was not so much a building as a system of structures ; one quadrangle within another, the second standing upon higher ground than the outermost, and the Temple proper upon a position highest of all, and forming the architectural climax of beauty, as it certainly stood highest in moral sacredness. The Temple of Solomon was originally built upon the rocky heights on the east side of Jerusalem, and was separated from the city by a deep ravine. The heights not affording sufficient room for all the outbuildings, the royal architect built up a wall from the valley below, and filled in the enclosed space with earth. Other additions continued to be made, until when Herod had finished the last Temple—that one which shone out upon Jesus and the pilgrims coming over the Mount



of Olives—the whole space, including the Tower of Antonia, occupied about nineteen acres. The Temple, then, was not a single building, like the Grecian temples, or like modern cathedrals, but a system of concentric enclosures or courts, a kind of sacerdotal citadel, of which the Temple proper, though the most splendid part of it, and lifted high above all the rest, was in space and bulk but a small part.”

Imagine yourself approaching the Temple in the days when Jesus lived. Think that you are a young Jew coming to it for the first time from some distant land. As it meets your vision, your imagination will be fired beyond description. Cresting the sacred hill, lifted well towards the heavens, the glitter of the gold, amid a sea of snowy marble, surrounded by fortresses, palaces, and other evidence of wealth and beauty, must stir your soul. Once within its gates, as you mount its steps and pass among its great colonnades, you will begin to realize how glorious is the whole.

Then as you assemble with your fellows before the Holy Place, and see the priest at the daily ministrations, you will be awed into reverence and devotion. Like the rest, you will remain in silent prayer, with your face towards the spot where the symbol of your ascending prayers rises in clouds of fragrant incense towards heaven. And when the man of God enters the Holy Place, where stands the seven-branched lamp, kept burning day and night, you will feel that he intercedes for you in the prayers he offers.

To those accustomed to the plain methods of worship of these Western countries, it is rather difficult to

realize all that the symbolic worship of the Temple meant to the Jew.

The officiating priests were very numerous in the last days of the Temple. The ritual they practised was full of symbolic lessons, as also were the various dresses of the ordinary priest and the High Priest.

The customary official dress of the priest was of white linen, symbolizing that purity of heart and life which it was expected the priest should always manifest. When on duty his feet were bare and his head was covered. It was supposed to be irreverent to enter the presence of Jehovah with uncovered head. Probably this custom arose among the Jews from the words spoken to Moses at Horeb, when the bush burned with fire and a voice said : " Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." But the full official dress of the High Priest was much more elaborate, beautiful, costly, and impressive. Over his garments of finest linen he wore what was called an "ephod," of blue, fringed with bells and pomegranates. On his head he wore a mitre, with a golden plate, bearing the words "Holiness to the Lord." Around him was a curious girdle of gold, blue, and purple, scarlet and fine-twined linen, whilst on his heart he bore the names of the twelve tribes of Israel engraved on precious stones, all according to the commands of God.

And now I must bring you to see the Temple area as it is to-day. I will not enter upon any points of controversy about the exact location of the ancient Temple, nor will I discuss here and now, as some have

done, whether or not the ancient Zion was located near the Temple area.

As we stand on this large area we may feel certain that we are at least on the very ground where once stood the Jewish Home of the Deity. Though no trace of the actual Temple remains, it is agreed, by those best able to speak on the subject, that here our feet press the ground over which the feet of the vast numbers of ancient Israel passed, and over which He also walked who claimed to be the Jewish Messiah.

You will not fail to notice several things as you look around. You will be impressed with the size of the area. The whole city of Jerusalem, inside the walls, comprises, say, about two hundred and nine acres. This area on which we now stand covers no less than thirty-five acres, so that one-sixth part of the city space is occupied by this site situated at the south-eastern portion of the city.

There to the east of us runs the wall of the city, the whole length of the area. Beyond that rises the Mount of Olives, of which we have a fine view from this point. To the west of us we look over what was once the Cheesemongers' Valley, and the Tyropean Valley, with the Tower of David farther west still. There to the north-west is the traditional Tower of Antonia, where, doubtless, in the days of Herod, stood the castle which bears that Roman name. It was from that tower that the Roman soldiery could look over the Temple courts and shoot upon the crowd when necessary. To that tower, too, the Apostle Paul was doubtless taken when



he was arrested at the instigation of the Jewish leaders. To the south of this present area there is the great building known by the name of the Mosque el-Aksa. We must visit that beautiful shrine before we leave this area.

There towards the middle of the spacious ground stands the Mosque of Omar. You cannot stand in front of that building and remain unmoved if you have any religious sentiment at all. You look at its coloured tiles and marbles in the clear sunlight, glistening as must have done the gold and marbles of the glory of Israel which once stood on that spot. Imagination carries you back to the remote past. You are standing where Ornan once had a threshing-floor. You may fancy that you see the ancient Patriarch Abraham, with his son Isaac, toiling up to the place where you now are. You see him erect his altar, bind his son, lay him on the wood, and raise his hand to plunge the weapon into him that will destroy his life and make him a human sacrifice. You will remember that you are where Solomon built his great and beautiful House of the Lord, that house which was unlike any other ever erected in the world before, and for the worship of one God, different from any other of which ancient history tells us. It was here, too, that Zerubbabel rebuilt the Temple after the return from captivity. And, perhaps most notable of all, you stand where once stood that great edifice to which He came who called Himself the Light of the World, perhaps in allusion to the Shekinah light, visible symbol of the ever present Deity, in that famous building.

If we linger here a few moments more it is because we are at so remarkable a place. It may well be doubted if there is in all the known universe a place around which so many sacred memories gather as they do about this. The Jews, the Christians, and the Moslems form a vast proportion of the religious population of the globe. And all these alike revere this place, which most great scholars declare to be the genuine site of the Ancient Temple of God. As you gaze down you may well imagine that you see the tribes come up to pay their devotions, make their offerings, and return with joy and gladness, that they have been here, as they believed, to come face to face with their Maker. Here you stand at the very centre of the religious life and devotion of the Jews, the centre of their poetical and political life.

You cannot fail to think of the little child that was brought here and presented in the courts. You will imagine you see the aged, sainted Simeon take that child into his arms, and say : “ Now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation.” You will not forget the boy who came from Nazareth to this place, to ask questions of the scholars who taught in the Temple courts.

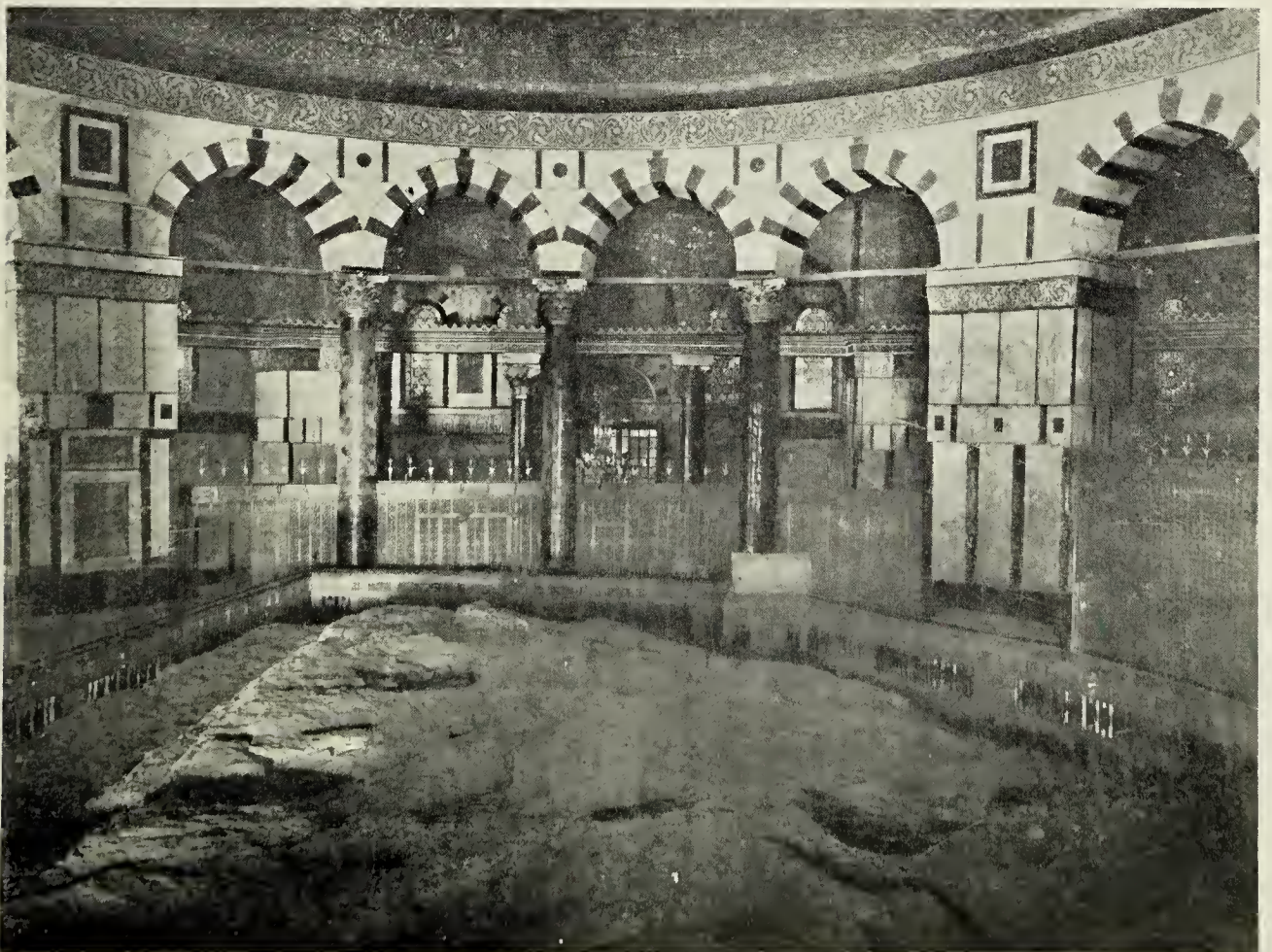
Then, too, you will perhaps think of the oppressions of the chosen people, how they have been scattered, their city destroyed so often, their goodly houses burnt with fire, their sons and daughters butchered, and those left to-day in many lands oppressed and despised. Well may the pilgrims of that race come as near to this place as they can, and kiss the remnants of stones of the wall.





*Photo. by American Colony, Jerusalem.*

THE MOSQUE OF OMAR WHICH STANDS ON THE SITE OF THE ANCIENT  
JEWISH TEMPLE AT JERUSALEM.



*Photo. by American Colony, Jerusalem.*

INTERIOR OF THE MOSQUE OF OMAR. THE DOME OF THE ROCK ON WHICH  
THE JEWISH ALTAR STOOD IS SHEWN IN THE CENTRE.





Well may they, in every part of the world, turn their faces towards this place, and pray for its restoration.

There stands the mosque, beautiful as a dream, and precious to the hearts of all Moslems. The building is octagonal. There are four gates of entry to it, facing north, south, east, and west. The exterior walls are covered with rich tiles, and a frieze of coloured tiles, with passages from the Koran written upon them, runs all round the eight sides of the building.

Though this beautiful building bears the name of Omar, that commander did not erect it. The historians tell us that the Caliph Omar captured and entered Jerusalem in the year A.D. 637. It seems that this Moslem soldier, like all Moslems, thought much of his religion. At a date before he conquered the Holy City, he had made a vow that he would build a sacred Moslem shrine on the very spot where once stood the Temple of the Jews.

When he entered the city he at once inquired for the site of the ancient Temple. When he was conducted to it, he found only a heap of rubbish and filth, the accumulations of many years. He made some clearance, and erected a wooden mosque on the eastern portion of the site. He prepared the ground for the larger building. Others who followed him carried on the work of building, until finally the shrine assumed its present form, perhaps about the ninth century.

Now let us go inside. It is somewhat gloomy, and not much light can enter it at any time. When your eyes have become accustomed to its subdued light you will be able to see what a glorious building it is. The

structure is built around the natural rock, with a great dome right over the very place where the ancient Jewish altar stood. The dome rises to a height of ninety-eight feet, is seventy-five feet across, and is composed of wood. There are many most beautiful columns in this building which support the arches and roof. These pillars were taken from various Christian churches, and are said to be as old as the fourth century. It is quite probable that some of these pillars are older than the fourth century, and may have stood in Herod's Temple. Between these columns there is some fine hammered iron-work, which dates from the days of the Crusaders.

Above these columns there are, around the building, some thirty-six most beautiful stained-glass windows. These windows are of great brilliancy, and form a remarkable and attractive feature of the building. They are said to date from the fifteenth century. The sacred rock is a bare, rough, huge mass. It is some sixty feet long and forty-five feet wide. It rises up above the marble floor almost five feet, with a rail round it.

The Moslems, like some Christians, have not a few legends and stories, some of them connected with this rock. It is said that when the prophet Mahomet was ascending to heaven, this rock was following him, but one of the angels seized it and put it back in its place !

Beneath the rock there is a cave, which we enter by a short flight of stone steps. In the centre of the cave there is a hole in the rock roof, and one in the floor



right beneath it, which is covered. The Moslems say that beneath that spot is the place of lost spirits. When stamped upon with the foot there is a hollow sound. There is now no doubt that these holes were sewers to carry off the blood and water from the numerous sacrifices of the Jews. The passage through the rock has been traced, and found to come out at the Valley of Hinnom.

I repeat, it may well be doubted if there is another building around which, and around its sacred site, so many precious memories gather as about this Mosque of Omar, or Dome of the Rock, as it is called. Those who erected it, and enlarged and improved it, spared no cost to enrich and beautify it, and all Christians who visit it will say that the Moslems have succeeded in making it one of the most beautiful of shrines.

But we must pass over it, for there are still other remarkable places on this great Temple area that we must visit. At the south of the area there is a great building known as the "Mosque el-Aksa." This imposing building was originally a fine Christian cathedral. It is now a Moslem mosque. The Dome of the Rock is not a mosque in the true sense, but a sacred shrine. El-Aksa is a mosque in which Mahomedan worship is held.

It was erected in the year A.D. 536 by the Emperor Justinian in honour of the Virgin Mary. At the conquest of Jerusalem it was turned into a mosque, and at various times since then it has been enlarged and embellished. Originally the building was in the

form of a cross, but additions since made to it have obliterated that shape. There are seven aisles, and a large number of columns. Several styles of architecture will be noticed, accounted for by the alterations and enlargements which have taken place in it since its first erection.

It is said that the murderers of Thomas à Becket were buried in this place. An old story is told that becoming penitent, they were pardoned by the Pope of the day, and came on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Here they sickened, died, and were buried.

One of the most noteworthy objects to be seen in this mosque is the beautiful pulpit. It was made in the twelfth century by a native of Aleppo. It is most exquisitely carved, and is inlaid with ivory and pearl. It is composed of wood known as the "cedar of Lebanon."

Leaving this beautiful building, we cross a well-paved part to the extreme south-east portion of the Temple area. Here we enter a dark staircase, and pass down to what we know as "Solomon's stables." We find ourselves under a long series of columns and arches of massive masonry. Tradition declares these vaults to be the stables in which King Solomon kept some of the forty thousand stalls of horses which we are told in 1 Kings iv. 26 that he possessed. Some sort of justification may be given to this idle tale by the fact that at the base of some of the columns holes are found, in which rings to hold horses were placed. It may be that some of the crusaders stabled their horses here. Some part of the masonry gives evidence that

it is much older than the rest. It may be that some of the stones formed part of ancient walls, much older than the present structures, which do not go beyond the days of Justinian. There can be no doubt that these pillars and arches, and such as these, formed part of the engineering work undertaken to hold up the platform of the Temple area.

Before we leave the Temple area I must take you on to the wall which runs along the whole eastern side of it. Here we get a most attractive view, and one that you will never forget. Below us is the Valley of Jehoshaphat, with numberless grave-stones marking the places where the dead of many generations lie peacefully sleeping. Most devout Jews would, I think, wish their bodies to be buried here, beneath the sacred soil of their fatherland, and as near to the site of their ancient Temple as possible. Over there is the Mount of Olives ; down there is the Garden of Gethsemane, to which I must take you another time. Yonder to the left is the Kidron, Absalom's Pillar, and the tombs of St. James and Zechariah.



## CHAPTER XI

### THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE

THE distance to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre from the hotel near the Jaffa Gate is not great. You pass down *David Street* and turn into *Christian Street*. That seems to be the proper order. David first, then David's greater Son. The Temple first, then the Christian Church. The Old Testament first, then the New.

When, therefore, I take you from the Temple to the Church, it seems a natural order of progression. It may be said that this church at Jerusalem is the most remarkable and attractive in the world. This is not because it is more beautiful than all others, nor because its worship is more soul-inspiring and uplifting than all others ; it is because it is supposed to be erected over the place where once stood the cross, and over that garden in which Joseph of Arimathea had a new tomb hewn in the rock. It is attractive to the Christian soul because of the tradition which calls it the place where His body was laid who has been followed by large numbers as the Redeemer of the world.

For close on sixteen hundred years there has been

a church here. Through all these centuries vast millions have travelled to the Holy Land to see this sacred spot. More come now than ever before. In days that are gone men endured hardships and faced dangers that they might get a sight of this church or the others that stood here before it. Kings, Emperors, and princes have left their dominions to come to it. In days when travel was hard, laborious, and full of dangers, they came in great numbers. Men have crossed rivers, seas, and continents to feast their eyes with the sight of the grave of their Saviour. And the stream of pilgrims still flows on. There is no slackening or falling off. Still they come from all lands both far and near.

As we stand in the courtyard in front of the entrance we may take time to glance at its history. So far as I know there is no real evidence of a building standing on this site earlier than the fourth century ; nor do I know of any evidence which fixes the site of the sepulchre earlier than that date. There seems to be some evidence that a heathen temple was erected over the site of the grave of the Nazarene early in the centuries ; but there is no reliable evidence of which I know that can be used to fix the date of a Christian building here, until Helena, the mother of Constantine, put up her church in the year 325, or thereabout.

Nor do I know one scrap of real history which fixes the place of Calvary and the tomb in the garden at an earlier date. As was the case with the grave of Moses, no man knowing where it is, so in the case of Jesus, no

one knows, nor will perhaps ever know, the exact spot in which His cross was erected, and the place in which His body lay for some days in the tomb.

This may seem strange, and one may be disposed to wonder that the Christians in the early centuries could allow the places to be forgotten. This surprise is quite natural, but it will be somewhat modified when the real facts of history are known.

In the year A.D. 70 Titus besieged, starved, captured, and sacked the city of Jerusalem. It was completely broken up ; its walls thrown down, its goodly houses burned with fire, and vast numbers of its sons and daughters put to death by crucifixion and the sword. For more than half a century after that destruction it was practically a waste, with but few inhabitants of any kind, and these mostly poor. About the year A.D. 130 all Jews and Christians were expelled from the city by the Roman Emperor Hadrian. The city was rebuilt by the Romans, and became almost entirely a Roman city. The walls were rebuilt, and perhaps along the line followed by the present walls. Generation after generation came and went before any Christian or Jew—if known to be such—was allowed to enter the Holy City ; and when, one hundred years after their expulsion, Christians were allowed to enter, it is not to be wondered at that no trace of the place of the cross and the garden tomb could be found, for there was not one solitary person living who could point out the actual place that the Christians must have longed to find.

The church in front of which we stand, and soon



must enter, or the first one built on the site of this one, came into being in a curious way. Helena, the mother of Constantine, came to Jerusalem in the year A.D. 325, or thereabout. Being a devout woman, she was anxious to build a church over the site of Calvary, but no one could tell her where it was. She was distressed, and naturally her mind was full of the subject. One night, says tradition, she had a remarkable dream, in which she fancied that she had discovered the place of the cross, and was told that at a certain spot three crosses could be found which had been buried by the early disciples that they might be preserved as precious relics. These crosses were those on which Jesus and the two thieves were crucified.

She related her dream to her attendants and followers. Soon after this the Orientals described the dream as a heavenly vision and altogether miraculous. Digging was carried out at the spot indicated, and sure enough three crosses were found just beneath the surface ! Rejoicing in the discovery, she had a church erected, which was finished and consecrated about the year A.D. 336. From that time on to the present, tradition has placed Calvary and the tomb where Helena believed she had found them.

Other buildings were erected about that first church. Church after church has stood on this site. The Persians destroyed the first buildings, the Moslems destroyed the next that were erected. In the tenth century fire partly demolished the church of that day, and we are told that the Moslems completed the

destruction. The present church was built by the Crusaders. Thus for sixteen centuries tradition has fixed this place as the real one, and vast millions have come and gone in the belief that it is indeed the place where the cross on Calvary stood.

Another site is now fixed upon, and not a few believe in it. It will not profit us to enter upon a discussion as to which is and is not the site ; and as it is my firm belief that the real site will never be known, I leave it for the curious to consider.

Now we must enter the sacred building itself. There are two doorways, one of which, the eastern one, is walled up. The moment we get inside the door, our attention is arrested by the presence of several Turkish officials on duty. Why are they there ? What have Turks, who are Moslems, to do with a Christian building ? These questions naturally arise. I asked them the first time I came here, and was saddened when I got the answer : these officials are there as the custodians of the building, and to prevent the various sects of Christians who own and use parts of the building from killing each other ! On festive occasions, as at Easter, when crowds of pilgrims are present in the church, I have seen many scores of Turkish soldiers inside the building ready to quell any disturbance which might arise ; indeed, at some of the more imposing services armed soldiers are always present.

The Latins, the Greeks, the Copts, and the Protestants all have their portions of the sacred building. It will take too long to speak of all the so-called sacred

places within the walls of this great Church. We need only look at a few of them.

Inside the building a little way we find a flight of stairs, which we mount, and stand right in front of the traditional place called Calvary. Here are two altars, one Greek and the other Latin. Both are elaborately decorated with various kinds of ornaments, the gifts of pious pilgrims from many parts of the world. At the Greek altar stands a Greek priest to receive the donations of visitors. Beneath this altar is a round hole in the marble, into which visitors are allowed to put their hands and feel at the rock. They say that the cross was placed in this hole. Near by there is a grating, which, when pushed aside, reveals the natural rock, with a great crack in it. This is said to be the rock that was rent at the time of the Crucifixion.

Descending the steps, we find ourselves in what is called the Rotunda. This part of the building is surmounted by a great dome sixty-five feet in diameter. Right beneath this dome and on the centre of the floor of the Rotunda stands another building, called the Holy Tomb. This is the traditional spot where the body of Jesus was interred. The actual tomb itself is a small chapel built of marble, and most elaborately decorated with lamps and candles and other ornaments. I should think that the largest candles in the world are here in front of this tomb chapel.

This Rotunda and the tomb are common to all the sects who occupy separate parts of the church itself.



I never stand in front of this tomb without very strange and mingled feelings. I feel that I am standing before one of the most remarkable and venerated places to be found on earth. During many past generations men and women of every clime have come to this place with deep reverence and godly fear. There is usually a crowd of pilgrims here. No one can stand and see the reverence, the awe, and the loving devotion manifested by the visitors, and remain unmoved. I think of the best blood of Europe that has been poured out on many a battlefield, in days that are gone, in order to rescue this grave from the Infidel and the Turk. Whether or not it be the actual place can make but little difference to our feelings as we stand here. Those who made such sacrifices for it never questioned its reality, and the throngs of unlettered pilgrims who now come to it from every land bring with them no doubts about its genuineness. They come and see it, reverently follow the forms of their particular religion, and then return home and thank God for the soul-saving sight they have been permitted to see.

We must enter the little chapel and look at the place for ourselves, whether we believe or are sceptical. We enter the vestibule, which is called the Chapel of the Angels. Here is a piece of marble which is described as part of the stone which originally stood at the mouth of the tomb. Bending very low, we pass from the vestibule into the tomb itself. It is very small, the whole building, including the vestibule, being only about twenty-six feet long and about eighteen feet

broad. The tomb itself is six feet by seven feet, the area of it is but forty-two square feet. Of this space nineteen square feet are covered by the marble sarcophagus, called the actual tomb. The little room is cased with marble. It is lit by some forty lamps, which belong to the various sects who occupy the church. These oil-lamps are kept constantly burning. Over the sarcophagus there is a marble slab, cracked across the middle. This slab is worn smooth by the millions of hands that have reverently touched it, and the lips of multitudinous men and women who in their devotion have kissed it.

Passing out of the little apartment into the Rotunda once more, I must ask you to notice that there are two holes through the walls of the chapel tomb, one on each side. They are blackened as by smoke. I must describe these to you. On the Greek Easter, which is usually one week apart from the Latin Easter, the members of the Greek Church have a great gathering here that they call the service of the "Holy Fire." I once witnessed this service, and was greatly impressed by what I saw. The church was filled with people in every part, from floor almost to the ceiling. Platforms had been erected between the square columns of the Rotunda. Every inch of space, both on the floor and elsewhere, was occupied. At one part of the service a great procession was formed, composed of all the dignitaries of the Greek Church of Jerusalem and those visiting the city from other lands. These were clothed in the gorgeous robes of their high office. Chanting the Litanies of their Church, and carrying

silken banners, they marched round the tomb many times. Large numbers of Turkish soldiers, each with his rifle, and standing shoulder to shoulder, made two solid walls of men between which the procession passed.

At a given moment the Patriarch, or Pope of the Greek Church, entered the small chapel tomb quite alone. It is said that when there he engages in devotion. The uninstructed and credulous people believe that while he is there alone the Holy Fire descends from heaven and miraculously lights tapers which he has with him. They are then passed through these holes, and the priests and others, who have bundles of tapers ready, light them at these projecting flames. They are then passed from one to another all round the building. At the service of the Holy Fire, at which I was present, it seemed to me that the church was one mass of glowing light almost as quickly as I describe the scene. Whilst vast masses of the ignorant still believe in this so-called miracle, it cannot be that any educated person can be so deluded.

Every part of this church has some tradition or other attached to it, most of which are utterly impossible of belief, and to listen to the stories of these so-called sacred places will only sadden you and take away any feeling of reverence which you may have had while visiting Calvary and the tomb. Here, for instance, is a list of some of the traditions : the Stone of Unction, Chapel of Adam, Chapel of Mary's Agony, standing-place of the women at the tomb, place where Magdalene stood when she mistook Jesus for the





*Photo. by American Colony, Jerusalem.*

FRONT OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE AT JERUSALEM, ON THE OCCASION  
OF THE FAMOUS FIRE SERVICE, AT THE GREEK EASTER.





gardener, Pillar of Scourging, the Prison of Christ, the Bonds of Christ, Chapel of the Parting of His Garments, Chapel of St. Helena, where the three crosses were found, Chapel of the Crown of Thorns.

Passing all these I will only detain you in this marvellous building for two more places.

Right opposite the Holy Tomb is the entrance to the Greek church. This is perhaps the largest and certainly the most elaborately decorated of any of the portions owned by the other sects. Right in the centre of the floor of this church there is a short column which is said to mark the very centre of the globe, to which reference is made in an earlier part of this volume. It is quite a common sight in the spring-time, when many pilgrims are at Jerusalem, to see numbers of them here at this column on their knees performing various devotions.

We pass out of this Greek church and walk past the chapel tomb right to the back of it. Here we pass into a rocky chamber and find ourselves among rock-hewn tombs. One of these, which is said to be an ancient Hebrew tomb, is called the Tomb of Nicodemus. Other tombs of the same character have been discovered near by. There are not a few people who think that as we are here in the presence of Jewish graves, we may find a little evidence in favour of the genuineness of the place which is revered as the grave of Christ. The chief objection which is raised against this great church being on the site of the Crucifixion is the statement of the New Testament that Christ was crucified outside the walls of the city. This



church stands inside the walls. Such objection immediately falls away when the fact is stated that the site of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre was outside the walls of the city in the days of the Crucifixion, and was only enclosed some years afterwards when one of the Herods took into the city a large portion of land on the northern side.

## CHAPTER XII

### OTHER HOLY PLACES OF JERUSALEM

Bazaars—Pool of Bethesda—The Mount of Olives—Garden of Gethsemane—Via Dolorosa.

FROM the church we will now pass at once to see the bazaars of Jerusalem. To anyone who has seen the bazaars at Constantinople, Damascus, or Cairo, those of Jerusalem will seem very poor, and dirty, and unattractive.

On leaving the church we find our way back to David Street. Not far away we come upon the covered markets, or bazaars, all poor, noted for smells, and usually crowded. The shops are small, the road narrow, and quite uninviting to Europeans, accustomed to shop in lofty, well-lit, spacious shops and arcades.

The Rev. J. Hanuer, who has lived for fifty years in Jerusalem, thus speaks of the bazaars :

“The bazaars themselves may perhaps best be described as very long-vaulted corridors or tunnels, built of ancient and very ruinous-looking masonry, with small chambers, by courtesy called “shops,” on either side. These shops are deep recesses, not more than twelve feet square inside. The passage-way along the bazaars is perhaps fifteen feet wide, not more. The only light and air come from the ends of the

tunnel, some hundred yards distant, or from holes in the centre of the vaulted roofs, twenty feet overhead, which also serve as vents for the escape of blue smoke and vapour from numerous cooks' and blacksmiths' shops located in the above-mentioned recess. The westernmost of the three tunnels is set apart for the use of butchers, blacksmiths, and coppersmiths, and makers of rough camel-leather shoes worn by the peasantry. . . . The middle corridor is called a 'Market of the Apothecaries,' because it is occupied chiefly by Eastern druggists, who, seated cross-legged and generally smoking at the doors of their respective places of business, sell spices, nails, sulphur, Oriental saddlebags and saddlery, rope, and string. . . . The third and easternmost of the three bazaars is about one-half as long as the two others, and is used by silversmiths and Oriental drapers. It is worth visiting, because it alone, of all the streets of Jerusalem, has yet remained unaltered from the condition in which it was sixty, or perhaps a hundred, or several hundreds of years ago."

I will take you now to the Pool of Bethesda. In the fifth chapter of the Gospel by John we have a description of this pool, which must have been very famous in those far-off times of which the Apostle writes. He tells us that at a certain season an angel came and troubled the waters of this pool, and thus gave it healing virtue. At this pool there was a great multitude of sick and suffering people all anxious to step first into the water after it was irritated by the angel. Whoever was able first to get into the pool was healed, no matter what his disease.

The site of this remarkable pool is located by John as being by the sheep-market, or sheep-gate. Several



places have been pointed out as the actual site. Each explorer takes his own view, and fixes upon what he thinks to be the most likely spot. It may well be that none of them is the correct one, and perhaps the actual place has still to be found. Like many others, it may lie far beneath the present streets.

The "sheep-gate" is known to have been north of the Temple, so men have sought the site somewhere in that direction. Near St. Stephen's Gate, north-east of the Temple itself, there is a large reservoir which for a long time was pointed out as Bethesda. It is now almost filled up with rubbish. Others, however, have placed the site elsewhere. It has been located somewhere near to the convent known as the "Sisters of Zion," and not far from where the Castle Antonia stood.

A generation ago someone, after much thought, said that Bethesda must be sought a little farther north than St. Stephen's Gate, not far from the place where now stands the Church of St. Anne. About five-and-twenty years ago, when the monks, attached to this church, were engaged in extension works, they had the good fortune to discover a large cistern hewn in the solid rock, it is said, to a depth of thirty feet. Men well versed in ancient matters immediately examined the place, and their conclusion was that here at the Church of St. Anne we have the actual Pool of Bethesda.

I have sometimes wondered if the Virgin's Fountain, near the village of Siloam, could have had any connection with this idea of troubling the water. The Virgin's Fountain is the only natural spring at Jerusa-

lem. And, strangely enough, it is intermittently troubled. That is to say, every now and then the water bubbles up from some depth below. The natives still believe that the water of this spring has healing virtue for certain diseases.

In passing I may mention that the revised edition of the Bible omits the words about the angel troubling the water.

Though this Church of St. Anne is not of much consequence in itself, still among the holy places it is worthy of a visit. Tradition says that Anne, the mother of the Virgin Mary, lived in a cave over which the church is built. The cave can still be seen by the curious. The church that originally stood on this site was erected in the sixth or seventh century. It was rebuilt in the twelfth. When Saladin was in power and authority in Jerusalem, he turned the twelfth-century church into a school. About the middle of the nineteenth century the Sultan of that day gave it to the French Emperor, Napoleon III. The church is cruciform in shape, and is now occupied by Catholic Brothers, who are under the protection of the French. These Brothers have improved the church and erected a school. It was while excavations were being carried on by them that they discovered some important remains of an ancient church. It seems this ancient church was built over five arches, or porches. Two pools are now to be seen, and there are traces of other porches. It may be that the ancient pool whose waters were possessed of healing virtue was situated here. At any rate, all the circumstances seem to make this site as likely as any of the

others, and perhaps even a little more probable than some of them.

The Mount of Olives is one of those places which any visitor to Jerusalem longs not only to see, but to visit. And as he does so he may feel a sense of relief from the uncertainties of many of the traditional places of the Holy Land. Here he may be sure that at least he has come upon a place about which there can be no manner of doubt. This hill was here before the Christian era began, before Abraham came to offer his son Isaac on Mount Moriah, and before any recorded history of which we know.

True, it has changed much as the centuries have passed, and, indeed, since I first knew it twenty years ago. Once, no doubt, there were vast numbers of olive-trees growing upon it, covering it from base to summit. Soon, however, there will not be one left. Building after building has been erected upon it, and soon all the natural beauty which it once possessed will be entirely gone. The old pathways along which the ancients travelled are disappearing.

We must ascend it ; we can either walk up it, or, by a rather roundabout way, ride to the top in carriages. There are several paths. The easiest and least steep is up the old pathway below the Garden of Gethsemane. When we arrive at the top what a glorious view is secured ! This is the place from which to look at the city. It is the highest point of the hills around Jerusalem. It is about 2,720 feet above the level of the sea.

There is a building here which belongs to the Moslems, and from the fourth century has been shown



as the place from which Jesus ascended into heaven. There is a gallery connected with this Moslem building, which we are permitted to ascend. Once we are there a sight bursts upon our vision which will live in our memory as long as we live. Yonder lies the city like a large and beautiful map spread out before our eyes. There is no view to be obtained in the whole world elsewhere with which there are such precious memories associated.

I must rapidly describe some of these to you. First of all you see, yonder, shining in the sunlight, the blue dome of the beautiful Mosque of Omar, standing where once stood Solomon's Temple. On the same area, lying to the south of the city, is the great Mosque of el-Aksa, once a beautiful Christian cathedral. At the north-west corner of the Temple area you see the Turkish Barracks, where once stood the Tower of Antonia.

To the north of the city and near St. Stephen's Gate stands the Church of St. Anne, where the Pool of Bethesda is supposed to lie. To the west of that, away yonder in the north-west quarter of the city, you can see the great dome of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, which covers so many of the traditional sacred sites. Then right beyond the Temple area, away at the south-west corner of the city, is Mount Zion, at the right-hand portion of which you see the great Tower of David, the citadel over which the Turkish flag is flying. Mosques, and synagogues, and churches, and dwellings of many kinds are before your eyes, making a picture of beauty which will be a joy for ever.

Looking once more towards the Temple area you

see in the city wall the Golden Gate. You now imagine that gate to be open under cover of declining day. David the King comes forth, and crosses the Kidron which lies down there in the valley. Absalom, his son, has won the hearts of the people, raised the standard of rebellion, and seeks to seize his father's sceptre, and sit upon his throne. David, not willing to fight against his own son, has left his palace, his throne, and all, and is fleeing up the side of this hill on whose summit we stand. As he comes, with his feet bare and sack upon his head, he weeps bitter tears. He passes not far from where we stand, over the shoulder of the hill, down on to the Plain of Jericho, across the Jordan to the land of Moab, until his trouble is past.

Later in time you would have seen the Prophet of Nazareth come up from behind the hill, there to our left, and when on the crest of this mount the city of Jerusalem burst upon His vision. There He wept bitter tears of sorrow over its sins and hardness of heart. There issued from His lips that marvellous and pathetic cry :

“ O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee ; how often would I have gathered thy children together as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not ! ”

In imagination you may see Him pass down the hill, enter the Golden Gate in triumph, while the people tore down branches of the palm-trees, and, mingling them with their garments, made a carpet over which the animal He rode passed to the streets of

the city. Not long after you see Him, in the moonlight, come out of those same gates, accompanied by a few of His friends, and wend His way to the Garden of Gethsemane, which lies down there in the valley.

If now you turn your face from the city and gaze eastward, you will see in the distance the outlines of the mountains of Moab and Gilead. Yonder, too, is the Dead Sea, lying calm and peaceful as a lake of molten silver, one end of which you can clearly see, though it is quite fifteen miles away. Stretching away to the left yonder is the Vale of the Jordan. Though you cannot see its waters from this point on Olivet, you may note its course, marked by the line of vegetation. Nearer to us is the way to Jericho, and the bare, bleak, wind-swept hills of the wilderness of Judea. It is altogether a magnificent panorama.

Quite near to us out there, a little to our left, as we again face the city, is the Chapel of the Lord's Prayer, which tradition says occupies the site of that spot where Jesus taught His disciples to pray. A French lady caused the chapel to be erected. Attached to it there is a courtyard, with thirty-two panels, on each of which the Lord's Prayer is written, each one in a different language.

And now, before we leave these Moslem premises, we must enter that little mosque in the courtyard over which we stand. That shrine is erected over the very spot where the foot of Jesus is said last to have pressed the earth as He went up to heaven.

I must now take you to the Garden of Gethsemane. It lies down there in the Vale of the Kidron. We enter



it by a low doorway, and find a pathway all round the garden. There is an iron rail, with rosemary growing thick inside the railings. At intervals there are rude illustrations of scenes from the last days of Jesus, known as the Stations of the Cross, a high wall enclosing the whole. The area of the garden is about one-third of an acre. It is in the possession of the Franciscan monks, who keep it in very good order. The monks will open the inner gate for us, when we can pass in among the flower-beds.

One striking feature of this garden is the eight olive-trees. These trees are evidently very old, twisted and gnarled. No one knows their age, but it must be very great. We are told that an olive-tree, if let alone, never dies down like other trees. When the trunk of one is decaying, a new shoot will spring from the old root, and thus it propagates itself from one century to another. The trees now growing there may have sprung from the roots of trees which were in the garden when Jesus came to it, and made it for ever famous. I see no reason to doubt, as many do, that this garden, if not the actual place of the Agony, may be very near to it. One writer says of Gethsemane :

“Over there in Jerusalem His Body was crucified ; but here was the scene of the crucifixion of His Soul. There the letter of the law was executed, but here the awful weight of its spirit was borne. There He drank the dregs of sorrow, but here the full cup was wrung for Him.”

Before closing this chapter, I must take you along one of the most remarkable journeys upon which you

will ever enter in this world. This is what is known as the Via Dolorosa—the Way of Sorrow—and is supposed to be the way along which Jesus travelled as He bore the cross to Calvary. Vast millions have gone this way, with tears and sorrow, in the belief that they were actually traversing the streets over which their Lord walked. There is not, there cannot be, much, if any, truth in the belief. The name now given to the way is not known to have existed earlier than the fourteenth century. There is, however, no doubt of there being an ancient pathway beneath some parts of this journey from the Judgment Hall to the place of crucifixion. A portion of this ancient Roman pathway can be seen at the Church of the Sisters of Zion, and also at another place.

Though I cast doubt upon the actuality of the Way of Sorrow, there can be no doubt in the minds of those who watch the pilgrims from various lands, as they tramp this way, that they believe it to be real. Nor can anyone, who thinks seriously, walk this way without a good deal of interest. The way is far from straight; indeed, it twists and passes through several streets. At intervals along the way are the Stations of the Cross, all numbered for the information of those who desire to pass them all. It is remarkable how tradition has here, as in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, associated real events with the various parts of this way.

If you start from the supposed place of the Judgment Hall, down whose steps with such calm dignity Christ walked, as pictured by Doré in his marvellous work,

your thoughts may go at once to the city of Rome. For there at St. John's Lateran Church they are supposed to possess the actual steps which once were here. Along this Via Dolorosa you will be shown the place where Jesus was flogged, where the cross was placed upon Him, the *Ecce Homo* arch, the place where He fainted, the very spot where Simon took the cross, where Jesus said "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for Me," and so on.

I must call your attention to the House of St. Veronica, the seventh station. There is a pretty story connected with it. The tradition tells us that just here, over where this house stands, Jesus was greatly perspiring beneath the weight of the cross He carried. A woman named Veronica, pitying Him, took a handkerchief and wiped the perspiration from His face. Jesus was so pleased with this kindly act that He miraculously imprinted upon the cloth a picture of His face. This same handkerchief is carefully treasured among the sacred relics at the great Church of St. Peter at Rome. This woman is also canonized as a saint.



## CHAPTER XIII

### ROUND ABOUT JERUSALEM

BEFORE we leave Jerusalem we must go round the walls of the city. In doing so we shall come upon many places of historical and Biblical interest. Some of these are identified as genuine, and such as no scholar disputes. Inside the city we are often in doubt, uncertainty, and perplexity. There is no city in the world, so small as Jerusalem is within the present walls, around which so many traditions gather. There probably never has been, and never will be, another like it. Every few yards you find some remarkable statement attached to some object. Whether it be a Saracen doorway, an ancient window-frame, a broken column, part of a wall, an old cistern, a piece of Roman masonry, or a bit of crusader's work, each has some story or other attached to it. To examine them all would take the working years of a lifetime, and to write about them all would require as many books as would fill a small library.

But when we come outside the city gates, and leave the sweltering crowd behind us, it is different. Out here in the open we can breathe the rare pure atmosphere, and have time and space to look about us.

We can see the hills and the valleys, and feel sure that these, at any rate, are not of man, though even as we pass round the walls we shall meet with tradition and uncertainty.

The usual method of going round the walls, adopted by Europeans, is to do so on the back of the despised, but most useful and patient animal, the donkey. But we can walk, as the journey is not a great one. It is a glorious one, however, and one that will repay the student.

We will pass out of the city by the Jaffa Gate. Here there is usually a very busy scene, for a kind of market is held here, and it forms a meeting-place, with shops and restaurants. We turn to the left, with Zion on our left as we start on the Bethlehem Road. Here we are reminded of the glowing words of the Psalmist, who has told us :

“Walk about Zion, and go round about her : tell the towers thereof. Mark well her bulwarks, consider her palaces ” (Ps. xlviii. 12-13).

On our right we pass what is known as the “ Lower Pool of Gihon.” If this be the ancient Gihon, then we are at or near the place where a most remarkable event took place, a thousand years before our Christian era began. In the first Book of Kings and the first chapter, we have a wonderful and glowing account of an Eastern coronation service which took place at Gihon. David the great warrior, poet, and king, was growing old. Anxious about the succession to the throne, and knowing of the strife and contention there

centred round the succession to his sceptre, he arranged to have his son Solomon crowned and proclaimed. The day was fixed, the men to take part in the service appointed, and a general assembly took place.

At the proper time, Solomon, riding on the royal mule, accompanied by the priest, the prophet, and the singers, arrived at the place called Gihon. The sacred anointing oil was poured upon the head of the young man by the priest. Then there was a great blast of trumpets, and a tremendous shout went up from the assembled crowd, "God save King Solomon!" One verse of the narrative strikes the reader as remarkable. It is that which says :

"And all the people came up after him, and the people piped with pipes, and rejoiced with great joy, so that the earth rent with the sound of them."

With the joyous shouts of those people ringing in the ears of our imagination, we turn to the left and enter the Valley of Hinnom. Hinnom is south of the walled city. It separates Zion from the Field of Blood, which, it is said, was bought with the money for which Judas sold his Master. This Vale of Hinnom, through whose rocky sides we pass, has a considerable place in Jewish history. Hinnom, in the days when Joshua was dividing the Holy Land among the tribes, was the dividing-line between the tribes of Judah and Benjamin.

It was here that those disgraceful scenes were witnessed when the horrid heathen god, Molech, was worshipped. The rites were wicked and cruel, and



were often resorted to by the various rulers who, like Solomon, went astray. Children were made to pass through the fire, human sacrifices were offered, down to the days of the reformation by King Josiah. In order to put an end to the outrageous practices which went on in Hinnom, he made the place ceremonially unclean by spreading human remains and other unclean things in the valley. It thus became a pit for rubbish, and a veritable cesspool into which a good deal of the sewage of the city was made to flow. In the course of time the name "Hinnom" was gradually changed until it became "Ge-Hinnom," and then "Gehenna." In the later ages of the Jewish period, fires were constantly burning here, to consume the rubbish and offal of the city.

Turning to the left, we come to the place where the Vale of Hinnom and the Vale of the Kidron join, and a short distance along the valley we reach the Pool of Siloam. About this pool, which is now of no great beauty, there is one remarkable thing which belongs to no other pool named in the Bible. It retains its ancient name. Opposite there, on the hillside, is the village of Silwân, and here is the Pool of Silwân, that is the Arab modification of Siloam. Here, once more, we are at a spot which is believed to be genuine.

It was to this place that Jesus sent the blind man, upon whose eyes He had put the clay. It was in the Pool of Siloam that he was to wash and receive his sight. Imagine you can see the man! Blind from his birth, he had never seen the face of her who bore him, had never seen the bloom upon a flower, never

gazed at the plumage of the birds, or the stars in the heavens above his head. What an affliction ! What a sorrow ! I cannot wonder that he, or any other blind man, would gladly obey any such command, if it gave the faintest hope of recovery. And what a joy must have come to him when he stood up after washing and bathing his eyes in this pool ! The light of heaven streamed into those hitherto sightless eyes.

The Pool of Siloam is about fifty feet long and nearly twenty wide. Church after church has been erected here as elsewhere over the sacred sites.

A short walk from the Pool of Siloam, still going to the left, brings us to a spring called the Virgin's Fountain. The women from the village opposite come to this spring to get their water for domestic purposes. It is somewhat remarkable that this is the only natural spring at Jerusalem. To get to the water two flights of steps must be descended, the first consisting of sixteen, and the second of thirteen. The basin is about eleven feet square. Several remarkable things connected with this spring are to be noted. Some years ago an explorer made a remarkable discovery here. He found at the back of the pool a passage leading to a shaft, which rose to the surface above. One wonders if this could have been in order to furnish water to the city in time of siege and war ?

A more remarkable find still was made some years ago. It was discovered that there is a tunnel through the rock running from this spring to the Pool of Siloam.

The passage is not straight. In this tunnel an inscription was found which described the making of

the passage. It seems that those who cut through the rocks worked from opposite ends, but succeeded in meeting. Unfortunately the inscription bears no date, but there are those who fix its date about 700 B.C.

In an earlier chapter I have referred to the Pool of Bethesda. Can it be possible that this fountain and the Pool of Siloam may be regarded as the ancient Bethesda? It is a fact that the Virgin's Fountain is intermittent. At times the water bubbles up and more than fills the basin. The overflow runs down the tunnel to Siloam. This overflow into Siloam at certain times would somewhat agitate the waters. There is still a tradition that the waters of the fountain possess healing qualities.

Passing on, still going northward, there is on our right what is called the Jews' burying-ground. Vast numbers of small tombstones mark the resting-place of the generations that once peopled the Holy City, as well as other lands. These graves reach a long way up the side of the Mount of Olives, and on our left, and right close up to the wall of the city, there are many Moslem tombs.

As we pass along it will be interesting to gaze up the side of Olivet, which is to our right. The Russians have got possession of a large part of the hills, and have erected beautiful and costly buildings there. A Greek church with many domes is to be seen there.

From this eastern side of the city along which we now travel we get a good view of the eastern wall of the city. The Golden Gate, with its two entrances walled up, is above us on the left.



On our right, as we reach the Valley of Jehoshaphat, we get a good view of the so-called tombs of Zacharias, St. James, and the famous Pillar of Absalom. The only certain thing about these tombs and pillar is that they cannot be what they are said to be, and one, if not all of them, can hardly be called tombs at all. That attributed to Zacharias is a mass of solid rock, with pilasters at the corners. There are no chambers of any kind in it. The Pillar of Absalom is attractive, and rises to a fair height. The inside of this is partly filled with stones, thrown, we are told, by Jews who have not much love for the memory of the rebellious son of the great King David.

While on this eastern side of the city we pass between two great graveyards. On our right and on the lower slopes of Olivet is the Jewish cemetery. Thousands of small square tombstones mark the last resting-places of those Israelites whose dying hours were somewhat cheered by the thought that their dust would lie beneath the sacred soil of the land of their fathers. On our left, and right under the eastern wall of the city, and the whole length of the wall with but one break, is the Moslem cemetery. The Jew on one side and the Moslem on the other ! In life there is but little love between them, but in death they rest in peace, and neither disturbs or hates the other. Death is the great leveller !

Those who have travelled in Mahomedan countries must have often been struck with the number of women to be seen in the graveyards on certain days of the week. These women visit their dead, and it is

strange how they will talk to the departed as if they could hear all they say. Indeed, the true Oriental does fancy that the departed hear. Hence they will detail to the dead the news of their homes, and give them details concerning domestic matters. They often bring flowers to deposit on the graves. And as few of these women can read, they will sometimes employ someone to accompany them and read or recite passages from the Koran, their sacred scriptures. This is done for the comfort of the souls of the departed. The custom is not unlike the practice in this country of praying for the souls of the departed.

It is interesting, to those who care for such matters, to notice the various kinds of stones in the city wall. Several styles of masonry are visible. This enables the student to fix, in some measure, the periods to which the various styles of work belong. And even those who know little and care less about these matters, will see that the present walls have been rebuilt partly out of the remains of former walls, and this process of rebuilding must have been repeated many times over. This is particularly noticeable in that part of the wall we are passing between the Golden Gate and St. Stephen's Gate. Formerly there was here a great valley, which has been shown by the excavations of an English explorer. It is now filled up with rubbish, over which we pass unconsciously. At one point in this short walk the former surface-level lies at over 120 feet below the present level.

When we reach the north-eastern corner of the walls, we turn to the left, and begin our journey along

the northern wall of the city. And this is a deeply interesting part of our journey. There are several places of note that we must stop to see. On our left is the famous Damascus Gate. This is supposed to be one of the most famous of all the gates. In its present form the gateway is not much, if any, older than the middle of the sixteenth century. But there are not wanting those who believe that it was here that the north gate stood. Some even suppose that it was through the gate that stood here that Jesus passed bearing His cross. It was perhaps here, certainly on this northern side of the city, that the armies which besieged ancient Jerusalem in the days of long ago would approach to their destructive work. The soldiers of the conquering Roman may have passed through the northern gate, when they had starved the city into surrender. At this point it has been shown that the level of the ancient city was some twenty feet, or thereabout, below the present level. The crown of an old archway is just visible above the ground near to the Damascus Gate. About the gate there is usually a crowd of people, and often the natives bring their sheep and goats to this place that they may sell them.

On our right is what is now called by many the Skull Hill. This is a low hill of limestone. The face of the hill, as seen from the road, presents a remarkable appearance. There are two great holes which look like the eye-sockets of a huge skull ; there is what looks like a forehead, a nose space, and mouth. At certain angles it presents a most remarkable appear-



ance, just as the rocks at many of our own seaports, and elsewhere, when seen from certain points, present what look like human figures. Close by is the tomb in a garden which men speak of as the Garden Tomb. General Gordon believed that here was the true "place of a skull"—the place of execution—the place called Calvary, where Jesus was crucified. And in the garden some think that they have the very garden in which was the new tomb in which no one had been interred, and where the body of Jesus was placed and lay for three days. Here, then, say some, we have the true site of Calvary. It would be wearisome to enter into and follow the arguments of those on both sides of this ever controverted question. It would be worth while if we thought any finality could be reached thereby ; but finality is, in my judgment, impossible.

Here is one who says : " This, no doubt, is the true site of Calvary." Assuming the Skull Hill to be Calvary, the tomb, commonly known as Gordon's Tomb, but now more properly called the Garden Tomb. Then I turn to another scholar, who says the tomb was excavated in 1873. It was full of bones to the roof. " It is not a Jewish tomb . . . and cannot be regarded as older than the twelfth century." Whatever reason there may be for supposing that the Skull Hill was Calvary, a twelfth-century tomb could hardly be the tomb of the year A.D. 33.

There are, however, in the immediate neighbourhood, Jewish and Christian graves.

On the top of the Skull Hill there is a Moslem burying-ground. With a company of English friends,

on one Saturday afternoon, I stood on the top of this hill. It was spring. Around us rested the dust of the dead, beneath the grass and the wild flowers. Over us there was glorious sunshine, which made all look beautiful. Just over there, on the other side of the road, was the northern wall of Jerusalem. Over that wall we could see the buildings of the city. There was the great dome of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, which, as we have earlier said, has been regarded for sixteen centuries as the true place of the cross ; here, beneath our feet, was the spot which, in more modern times, has been called the true place — the ancient and modern places just close to us, one now inside the “gate,” and the other outside the city wall, both sites “without the gate” in the days of the crucifixion. Whichever place, or whether either was the real spot, mattered but little to us. Here was Jerusalem, in which we stood, and we knew that in any case the true site of the cross and the tomb could not be far away.

When I had finished a short address to my companions, someone suggested that we should sing a hymn. We were all Christians, but of various denominations, Churchmen and Nonconformists. What should we, what could we, sing ? There seemed to me to be but one hymn, that such a company, at such a place, could possibly sing. So we sang—

“ There is a green hill far away,  
 Without a city wall,  
 Where the dear Lord was crucified,  
 Who died to save us all,

“He died that we might be forgiven,  
He died to make us good,  
That we might go at last to heaven,  
Saved by His precious blood.”

We could not get beyond the third verse (which is the second verse I have here given); we were so impressed that our voices failed us. The surroundings, the place, and the associations were such as to make us all feel subdued, and solemnized, and thankful.

In this walk around the city, which we shall soon finish, there are many places at which we might have stopped and lingered long. There is one more remarkable place we must visit.

Solomon's Quarries lie right under the city, and we must not hurry past them.

These underground quarries, from the entrance to the farthest extent, stretch for a distance of about 600 feet. They are, of course, quite dark, and candles must be used by those who enter. No one should attempt to enter alone. They were discovered about the year 1852, and have come to be called Solomon's Quarries, perhaps because of a passage in 1 Kings xi. 7, which says, referring to the stones used in the building of Solomon's Temple :

“And the house, when it was in building, was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither : so that there was neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was building.”

Some have said that it was in these quarries that Solomon had the stones prepared, and when ready sent up into the city by some shaft closed now and not



known. They are certainly remarkable places, and marks of the tools used by the quarrymen can be clearly seen in the rock. The stone found in the cavern is soft, and is said to decay after some years of exposure. It is altogether unlike the material in the stones which still exist in the wall of the Temple. The great age claimed for these quarries has still to be established, but they are, nevertheless, remarkable.

## CHAPTER XIV

### BETHLEHEM AND HEBRON

IF I have kept you long at Jerusalem, it is because the great centre of interest is in that city. Now, however, we must start on our pilgrimage to other parts of this wonderful land. The cities most generally visited are Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and Nazareth. Thousands of pilgrims come and return happy if they can see these three places. Large numbers, however, never leave Judea until they seek their homes in the distant parts of Russia from whence they came in largest numbers. They make for Jerusalem, then Bethlehem, and the River Jordan. We must go far beyond these places before we end our pilgrimage.

We start from the Jaffa Gate, pass what is called the Lower Pool of Gihon, and start on the Bethlehem Road. We pass the Jewish settlement, the German Colony, and the wayside well at which, tradition says, the three wise men, who came to the Nativity, stopped to drink. It was while drinking that they saw the reflection of the star in the water of the well. We pass the British Ophthalmic Hospital, for whose healing help there is great need in Palestine. We go through the Valley of Rephaim. Soon we reach the Convent

of Elijah, on the crest of the hill. It is said that Elijah rested here when fleeing from Jezebel, though there cannot be much, if any, truth in the tradition.

At this point a most delightful view is obtained. Jerusalem is seen behind us, and Bethlehem before us, both beautiful and attractive as seen from this point. Far away to the east rises a remarkable hill, known as the burial-place of Herod. A short journey brings us to the tomb of Rachel, so often pictured in English illustrated books. It is a small, comparatively modern building, with a dome. Judged by the Biblical narrative, it must either be on the actual ancient site, or very near to it.

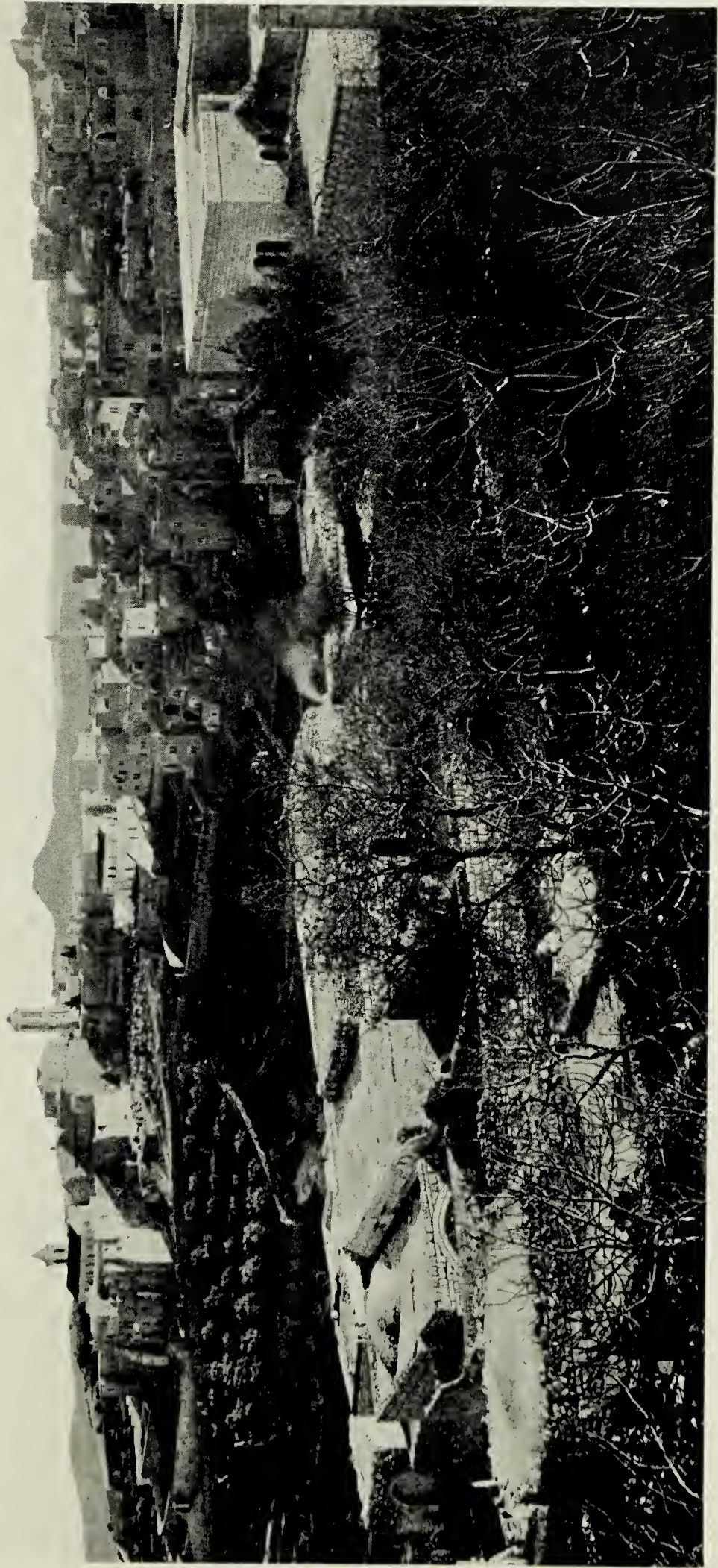
It was here that the Patriarch Jacob buried his cousin Rachel, who was his favourite wife. In Genesis xxix. 20 we are told that—

“Jacob served seven years for Rachel; and they seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had to her.”

In his wanderings Jacob was on his way to Bethlehem, perhaps to get a resting-place for his wife. She was taken ill before he reached the city. In Genesis xxxv. 16-20, we have the beautiful poetic story of the circumstances, which I must here quote :

“And they journeyed from Bethel; and there was but a little way to come to Ephrath: and Rachel travailed, and she had labour. And it came to pass, when she was in hard labour, that the midwife said unto her, Fear not; thou shalt have this son also. And it came to pass, as her soul was departing, (for she





*Photo. by American Colony, Jerusalem.*

BEAUTIFUL BETHLEHEM.





died) that she called his name Ben-oni, [the son of my sorrow :] but his father called him Benjamin [the son of the right hand]. And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem. And Jacob set up a pillar upon her grave : that is the pillar of Rachel's grave unto this day."

It is a most interesting and pleasing fact, that this tomb is one of the few places in the Holy Land which is alike venerated by Jews, Moslems, and Christians.

As we draw near to the little town of Bethlehem, we see that it is picturesque, attractive, and wholly unlike what we see in our own land. Often as I have approached it, I have thought of Joseph, who, with his wife, came to this little town in the hope that he might reach it before sunset and find a resting-place for her. As Mary, of old time, came up this gentle slope toward the city, and saw the vines and figs, and the square buildings, and the crowds approaching, we wonder what thoughts occupied her mind. Though its history is so famous, and though it is so very ancient a place, it was probably never large—just a big village, delightfully situated on the hillside. Now we are at the entry at the gate.

Bethlehem is one of the oldest cities in Palestine. Next to Jerusalem, it is the most popular place in the Holy Land. Of all the millions of pilgrims who find their way to the Holy City, there are but few, if any, who return to their own land until they have first visited "the city of David, which is called Bethlehem." Nor is this because of its size, its commercial importance, or its beautiful and costly buildings. Men visit



London and New York, and after weeks spent on their streets, return home, feeling that years are needed to grasp the proportions of these cities ; but Bethlehem is a village partly on a hillside in a rural district. Men visit Birmingham, and Manchester, and Liverpool, and are struck with amazement at the huge factories and warehouses of these cities, and marvel at their collections of goods to be sent to all the markets of the world ; Bethlehem, except a few people who work religious figures into pearl and other shells, is destitute of manufacturers and manufactories. Those who can spare the time and the money visit the city of Athens, that they may revel among the architectural and artistic skill seen in the ruined remains of her ancient temples and famous Acropolis. Bethlehem has no such treasures. And yet this village, always “ little among the thousands of Israel,” has a fame which outrivals the others, and has attracted and touched men’s hearts as they never did. It was here the Son of God was born ; it was here the holy child Jesus first saw the light of that world into which He was given such a poor reception, and which so cruelly sent Him out ; and it was here the ancient prediction concerning the coming of Him who was from everlasting had its fulfilment. Except the Church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem, there is not a place on the face of the globe so dear to Christian hearts as the Church of the Nativity in “ the city of David, which is called Bethlehem.”

Hastening on, we are soon in sight of the place we seek, for yonder it is, with all its sacred memories and poetic stories gathering about it as we approach.

Do you see that company of women there, surrounding two other women who have just arrived with marks of travel upon them? Who are they, and what does the crowd mean? They are ancient Bethlehem women, who have come out to give a welcome to a former neighbour and friend, who has just come back from the strange land in which she has left behind her dead husband and two dead sons. Well may that ancient matron exclaim in the sorrow of her heart: "Call me not Naomi; but call me Mara, for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me"!

Do you see the fields down there? It was out there that Ruth, the Moabitish damsel, daughter-in-law of Naomi, gleaned after the reapers, filling her veil with ears of corn for the support of herself and her mother-in-law. It was here she met the prosperous farmer, Boaz, married to whom afterwards, she became the grandmother of King David, and thus was a remote ancestor of Jesus. It was in those fields at which we now look that the shepherd boy, who afterwards became King, kept his father's sheep. It was, perhaps, in those very fields that he composed some of the sweet and helpful psalms which bear his name. Over yonder he manifested his courage in slaying the wild beasts which robbed the flock he kept. It was in those same fields he left the sheep in the hand of a keeper when he went forth to the army and fought and slew Goliath the giant of Gath.

Out there over those same fields the light of heaven shone on that night when the angels sang of peace and good-will to men.

We hasten into the little town. As we enter we must pause for a moment at that well. This well is the centre of as fine a passage of love and devotion as can be found anywhere. Many years after David was crowned King, he was at war with a powerful enemy. He was entrenched in one of the strongholds of the land, surrounded by a number of veterans, who, like himself, bore the scars of many a battle, and many a victory. David was suddenly seized with a passionate longing for his native town of Bethlehem, and longed for a drink from the well of whose waters he had often drunk when a boy. He exclaimed in the hearing of some of his men :

“ Oh, that one would give me a drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate.”

Three of his brave and fearless warriors immediately started off to gratify the wish of their leader. Cutting their way through the ranks of the Philistines, their swords dripping with the blood of the slain, they reached this well, drew from its depths the clear, cold water for which their lord had longed, and fought their way back to the camp. To their amazement, and to the credit of their King, he would not drink it, but poured it out before them. It is at once an illustration of the daring and devotion of the soldier, and of the self-denial of the King.

May we not pause one moment more before we enter the town to gaze yonder at two travellers who approach ? There has been much movement in the country, for the Roman ruler has issued orders for a census, and all



must go to their native places to be taxed. This couple, Joseph and Mary, have come from the north, that they may be enrolled in their native village of Bethlehem. She is not in a fit condition to travel, and they both bear the marks of their journey. What must have been the feelings of this young woman as she approached this place ?

On entering the city we find its houses well built, its people well clad, its shops well stocked, and the whole place wearing an air of prosperity seen in but few of the towns of Palestine.

Following the main street, we come right to the place which makes this little town now famous, the church which is said to cover the very spot at which the Saviour was born. Entering the church, we find ourselves in a long, large nave, rich in its possession of five rows of rare old marble columns, each of a single stone, some of which, it is said, once stood in the Temple at Jerusalem. Portions of the church are marked off as the property of the different sects, the Greeks, the Armenians, and the Roman Catholics, whose suspicion, jealousy, and hatred of each other are such that Turkish soldiers are always on duty in the church to maintain order and prevent bloodshed. Descending steps to a depth of twenty feet below the floor level of the church, we reach the cave called the Grotto of the Nativity. The walls of this cave are covered with marble, curtains, and embroidery, the natural rock being nowhere exposed. There, at one side, on the floor, shines a silver star, which marks the spot where it is said God was made flesh and began His

earthly life. Over this star swing some sixteen or more silver lamps, placed there by the different sects, and always kept alight. Upon that marble pavement, where tens of thousands of people in all ranks of life have knelt, I bent my knees that I might read the inscription, placed my hand upon the star, and breathed a silent prayer to Him I adore as my Saviour and King. Rising to leave the place, I was shocked and startled to notice, as I did then for the first time, armed Turkish Mahommedan soldiers standing to guard the place.

This church is probably the oldest Christian church in the known world. Erected by Constantine in A.D. 330, it was dedicated by him to the Virgin Mary. Though it has often been repaired, beautified, and probably enlarged, it has stood the test of the ages. It is a curious fact, that while every other ancient Christian building in Palestine has been destroyed in one way or another, this one has survived. While the worship of many other buildings has been interrupted or changed, this has always remained a Christian church since its first consecration until to-day. Baldwin I. was crowned in this fine building, and the roof was renewed by Edward IV. of England. Probably we are in the very church which was erected over the place where Christ was born. That great scholar of the fourth century, St. Jerome, lived here at Bethlehem. He was the man who translated the Scriptures into the Latin vulgate, which has formed the groundwork of most of the translations made since his day. Jerome believed that the church stood over the khan, or inn, or stable, where the Redeemer was believed to

have begun His earthly life, and says that there were old inhabitants living in his day, who remembered the ruined khan which was said to be the birthplace.

It would not profit us much to spend time in discussing, as some have done, whether, after all, Christ was really born at this Bethlehem. There is another Bethlehem, some six miles from Nazareth in the north. We are told that though that village which bears the name of Bethlehem is small and poor, the district is a well-wooded one, and attractive. So far as I know, all the evidence, or all that is reliable, points to Bethlehem of Judah, where we now are, as the proper and scriptural site. The present town has one main street, which winds about until it ends at the church we are just leaving.

The population of Bethlehem may be recorded as about 8,000 souls, mostly Christians. The well-cultivated land, fruitful cornfields, and terraces covered with vines and fig-trees, all bear evidence of the industry of its people. This town is certainly the most Christian of any in the southern parts of the Holy Land. The dress of the women of Bethlehem, more especially of the young women, is rather picturesque and beautiful. Here, too, it may be said that the girls are among the most attractive of those of any town in the land, except, perhaps, at Nazareth.

From Bethlehem we must go farther south, to Hebron. It is a long journey, but as there is a fairly good road we can do it from Jerusalem in one day in a carriage.

On the way to the southern city we will turn aside



a little while, that we may pay a visit to what we know as Solomon's Pools.

These pools consist of three reservoirs, and were undoubtedly connected with the ancient water-supply of Jerusalem, and always have been. When they were first constructed, and by whom, is not now known, and perhaps never will be known in our days. The supply of water to a mountain fortress, such as Jerusalem, must always have been most important, and not a little difficult to obtain. For many months of each year, it is indeed a thirsty place. At Jerusalem itself there is but one known spring. Whilst there are heavy falls of rain at certain seasons, there are long periods during which the only moisture for the land is that obtained in the heavy dews, like the dews of Hermon.

In this country in which we live, if a man builds a house, he almost invariably digs out the ground for a cellar. In Jerusalem, he first digs for a cistern. Into this cistern he runs the water in the rainy season, and most of the water used at Jerusalem for domestic purposes is rain-water. But the rain-water of that city is not like the rain-water of a great city in England, black with the soot of innumerable chimneys.

These pools or reservoirs at which we now stand were constructed by some ancient engineer in order to supply the needs of the city lying yonder some miles away. I have never yet heard of any real objection that carries weight against their construction by the great builders and engineers of the reign of Solomon.

Here they are, at any rate, partly cut out of the

solid rock, and partly made of solid masonry. There are three of them, each below the other, of which the upper one is the smallest, and the largest is the lowest. The fall from the highest to the lowest is about 400 feet. The smallest of the three is 350 feet long, and 236 feet wide at the widest part. It is said to be 25 feet deep. The middle pool is longer, wider, and deeper than the uppermost one. The lowest of the three is 200 feet longer than the highest, and twice its depth. There are many springs in the district which feed these pools. If they were kept in proper order, and used as they might be, they would be an untold blessing to the land.

Originally the water was conveyed by aqueducts from the pools to the Temple, into the many cisterns of the Temple area. These aqueducts can be traced, and many cisterns still exist on the Temple space. Water is still supplied from the lowest of the pools to Bethlehem and Jerusalem.

And now I bring you to Hebron, one of the most ancient cities in the known world. Under various names it has been known since the very beginning of history. Long before either Greece or Rome had any history at all, Hebron was there. Long before Isaiah, either the first or the second, delivered his addresses, or wrote his sermons, it was a thriving place. Before Solomon or David sat on Israel's throne, we know that Hebron was a place of importance. Before Israel itself was, when Jerusalem was held by the Jebusites, this ancient city flourished. Before the judges, before Abraham, we know of Hebron, but under another

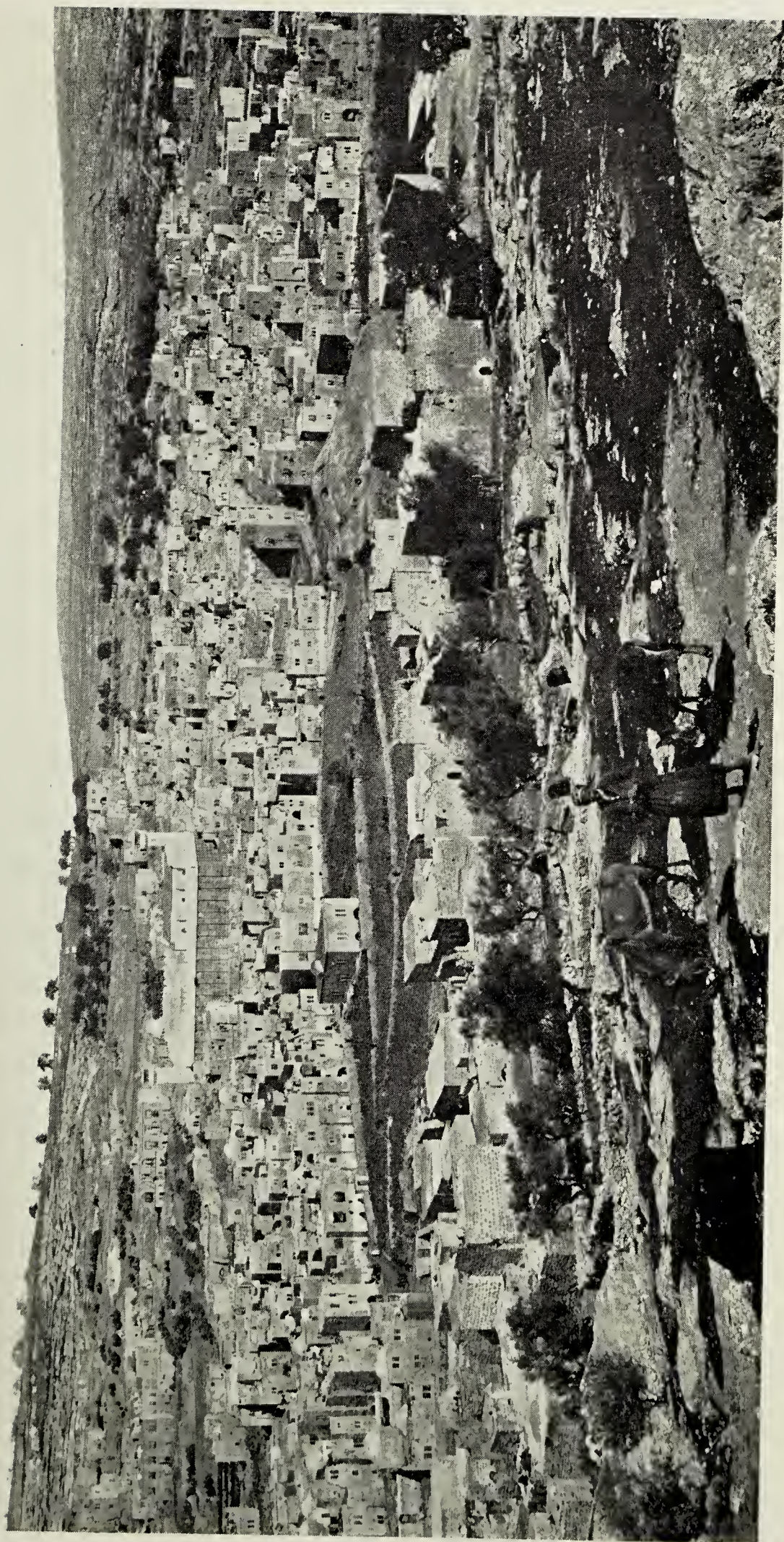
name. *Mamre* and *Kirjath-arba* were two of its former names.

The associations of this city with the early Bible history are very numerous. And before we speak of it as it is to-day, it may be well to say a few words about what it was in ancient days.

A city whose history is known for at least 4,000 years is, to say the least, most remarkable. When Abraham lived at Hebron, it was probably a walled city, and may even have had, says one, four divisions, like ancient Jerusalem. It perhaps took its name of *Kirjath-arba* from one of the ancients named Arba, the father of Anak, the giant (Josh. xxi. 11). We are told that Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt. The founder of the Jewish race, Abraham, the friend of God, dwelt here. The Patriarch Jacob also resided here, and from these districts he sent his son Joseph, his favourite son, wearing his coat of many colours, to seek his absent brethren. And when those sons of Jacob had stripped Joseph of his coat, it was to Hebron that they came with the well-known garment, dyed in the blood of the slain animal, to make believe that it was their brother's blood. Jacob, believing their story, and not suspecting the deception, passed through all the ancient ceremonial of mourning. He "rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his son many days." In passing, it may be well to notice that, as Jacob practised deception upon his father, when he was old and his sight had failed, so did his sons deceive him when he was old.\*

\* Gen. xxxvii. 34.





*Photo. by American Colony, Jerusalem.*

A GENERAL VIEW OF THE CITY OF HEBRON.





It would be interesting, if we could in more detail picture the life as it was in this city 2,000 years before the Christian era. It passed through many experiences, had to encounter many and severe struggles, and was finally given to Caleb by Joshua. It was also made one of the cities of refuge, to which the man who accidentally slew his neighbour might flee for safety.

For a time it became a royal residence, for we know that the great King David made it the capital of his kingdom when he reigned over the kingdoms of Judah and Benjamin. Here it was that he dwelt for at least seven years. When he became monarch of the whole of the tribes, he moved his residence to Jerusalem. Hebron, which satisfied his needs when he ruled the smaller kingdom, was not suitable when he was ruler of the whole land. It was during his residence in this far southern part of Palestine that his son Absalom, who gave him so much trouble later on, was born. It was to Hebron that Absalom came when he was plotting to wrest the sceptre and throne from his father David. Under pretence of religious service he came here, not to worship, but to carry on his plot and get ready for raising the standard of rebellion.\* The most remarkable piece of history respecting Hebron is the purchase of a grave there by the Patriarch Abraham, in which to bury his dead wife. The story as related in the Book of Genesis is so beautiful that I cannot forbear to quote it :

“And Sarah was an hundred and seven-and-twenty years old : these were the years of the life of Sarah.”

\* Josh. xiv. 13, 14 ; 2 Sam. xv. 10.



(This is the first time the Bible gives the age of a woman.)

“And Sarah died in Kirjath-arba; the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan: and Abraham came to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her. And Abraham stood up from before his dead, and spake unto the sons of Heth, saying,

“I am a stranger and a sojourner with you: give me a possession of a burying place with you, that I may bury my dead out of my sight. And the children of Heth answered Abraham, saying unto him, Hear us, my lord, thou art a mighty prince among us: in the choice of our sepulchres bury thy dead; none of us shall withhold from thee his sepulchre, but that thou mayest bury thy dead.

“And Abraham stood up, and bowed himself to the people of the land, even to the children of Heth.

“And he communed with them, saying, If it be your mind that I should bury my dead out of my sight; hear me, and entreat for me to Ephron the son of Zohar,

“That he may give me the cave of Machpelah, which he hath, which is in the end of his field; for as much money as it is worth he shall give it me for a possession of a burying place amongst you.

“And Ephron dwelt among the children of Heth: and Ephron the Hittite answered Abraham in the audience of the children of Heth, even of all that went in at the gate of his city, saying:

“Nay, my lord, hear me: the field give I thee, and the cave that is therein, I give it thee; in the presence of the sons of my people give I it thee: bury thy dead.

“. . . And Abraham weighed to Ephron the silver, which he had named in the audience of the sons of Heth, four hundred shekels of silver, current money with the merchant” (Gen. xxiii. 1-16).

That grave became one of the most famous tombs in history. Into it the bodies of Sarah and Abraham, Rebekah and Isaac, Leah and Jacob were placed. Over that site there stands to-day a large mosque, into which but few Christians have ever been permitted to enter. There is but little doubt that among the places in the Holy Land this is one of the certainties. I have never been inside this mosque, nor do I hope ever to be permitted to enter it. We may come alongside it, and pass about half-way up the steps which lead into the building, but entrance is forbidden to Christians.

The mosque, like many other buildings in Turkish dominions, was once a Christian church. But, like the Mosque el-Aksa at Jerusalem, the Mosque of St. Sophia at Constantinople, and many others, it has been altered to suit the tastes of the Moslems. On the steps of this mosque you will notice cracks and a hole in the wall. Into these crevices Jewish visitors will sometimes put written messages and prayers to Abraham, the father of the faithful.

We must pass through the streets of the town with a good deal of circumspection, for the inhabitants have but little love for us, and are said to be very bigoted, and very fanatical. It would not take much to collect an angry crowd that might end in serious trouble for us. Happily, there is not much to see here, besides the mosque. The streets are narrow, very dirty, especially in some parts, so much so that I am sure you will be pleased to get away. It is difficult to imagine this as a royal city, the centre and seat of

David's government. The district identified as the ancient Valley of Eschol, from which place Joshua's men returned with such enormous clusters of grapes, is still attractive and beautiful. There are many gardens and vineyards. The present name of the valley translated into English means the "Valley of Apples." The population is said to be somewhere approaching 20,000. Needless to say, they are mostly Moslems.

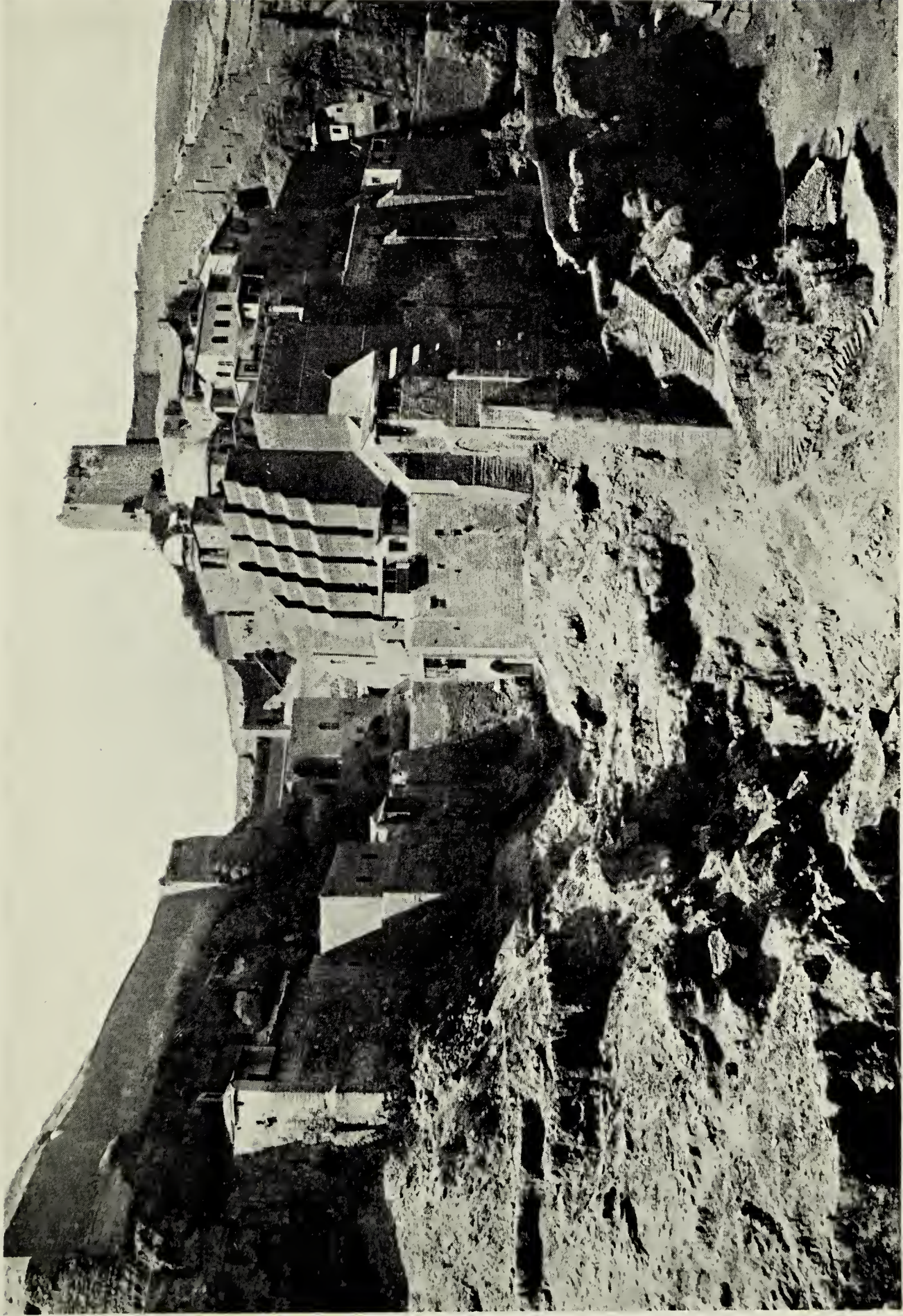
There are glass-works at Hebron, which turn out great quantities of glass rings, and bracelets, and anklets of all sorts, which are worn by natives of Palestine as ornaments. There is also a considerable business done here in the manufacture of goatskin bottles, in which we often see men carry water to be sold for domestic use.

The Pool of Hebron is a very large pool of water about 130 feet long. There is also a smaller one. These pools supply the town with a good deal of its water. It was over one of these pools that the hands and feet of those who murdered Ish-bosheth were nailed by the command of David (2 Sam. iv. 12).

Before closing this chapter I must bring you quickly from Hebron to one of the most wild and weird places in Palestine, perhaps in the world—the Convent of Marsaba. It is a remarkable structure, built on the side of the mountain, in the midst of wild scenery, bare, bleak, and barren. The monks who live here are said to be wealthy. Many raids have been made upon them and their stronghold.

When I went to it I refused to enter it, for I was





*Photo. by American Colony, Jerusalem.*

THE FAMOUS MONASTERY OF MARSABA, BUILT INTO THE ROCK IN A WILD WEIRD DISTRICT.

WOMEN ARE NOT PERMITTED TO ENTER THIS MONASTERY.





told that no woman was permitted to cross its threshold. I said then, "I do not want to have any dealings with any men who are afraid of admitting women to their dwelling-place," so I have never entered. For the description of its interior I am entirely indebted to others. Says one :

"Having entered, we found ourselves in one of the strangest places that human ingenuity ever contrived for a dwelling-place. It is a series of precipices with walls of natural rock and artificial battlements. You look down at buildings, and courtyards, and labyrinths of passages, and up at curious holes in the walls, with ledges in front, where are the cells and dwelling-places of the monks. The place is full of mystery. You see men walking upon these ledges of rock, and turning into these holes in the walls. And you look upon a little garden hanging in the air, as it seems, with a solitary palm-tree looking down into the chasm, in which are more dwellings, and chapels, and cupolas."

This Monastery of Marsaba is not only wild and weird, but is of great age. There has been a settlement of Greek monks there since the fifth century. The founder was St. Sabas. I am told that the rules of this monastery are very severe. There is only one authorized meal a day, and the monks are never allowed to have flesh meat. It has been stated that the grand hymn which begins, "Christian, dost thou see them," was composed by St. Andrew of Crete when he was a monk at Marsaba. Archdeacon Dowling, of Haifa, Palestine, tells us that at one time there was a most important collection of between 60,000 and 70,000



manuscripts at Marsaba. Some of these were destroyed by fire. Among these there were over 100 ancient Greek manuscripts on vellum. Some time ago the valuable library of Marsaba was removed for safety to the shelves of the Convent of St. Constantine, at Jerusalem. It will interest scholars to know that among the treasures was the manuscript of the work known as the "Teaching of the Twelve Apostles."

## CHAPTER XV

### JERICHO, THE JORDAN, AND THE DEAD SEA

THE easiest way of getting to Jericho, the Jordan, and the Dead Sea, is by carriage from Jerusalem. Every day, in the season, carriages are going and returning. The carriage-road lies along the way the man is presumed to have gone who fell among thieves, who used him so badly long ago. It is a two days' journey in carriages—one day out and one day in, and the pilgrim usually sleeps at Jericho. Leaving the city by the Jaffa Gate we wind around the walls, pass the Skull Hill, the Garden of Gethsemane, and Bethany. The road is down through the wilderness of Judea, and in parts of the journey it is a wilderness indeed. The bleak, bare hills, wind-swept and largely forsaken by man and beast, are somewhat forbidding in their aspect.

There is another roundabout and longer, but more attractive, way of getting to Jericho, and it was by this longer route I first approached the places named in this chapter. It is by way of Bethlehem, Marsaba and out by the Dead Sea, and on to the River Jordan.

The day on which I first saw the River Jordan was full of interest and excitement. When the Arabs

awoke me in the early morning by the noise they made at my tent-door, I found myself at Marsaba, near to the famous convent which gives its name to the place. We were in the saddle at 7.30, and started for our six hours' ride to the Jordan by way of the Dead Sea. Our ride was over what I should think is one of the worst roads in the world, if road at all it can be called. We passed along the edges of deep chasms, on the ridges and across the sides of lofty mountains, and up and down white slippery rocks, where English horses would be exhausted in an hour, but over all of which our Arab steeds carried us in perfect safety. But if the journey was rough, it was in some parts of it one of the most delightful that men need ever wish to travel. The valleys and some of the hills were covered with millions of the loveliest of wild flowers, which grew in the richest profusion in one continuous mingled mass, covering the lower parts of some of the mountainsides as if with the rarest and the richest of carpets.

About noon we reached the northern end of the Dead Sea, and were greatly struck by the stillness of the place. We remembered that out here were the Cities of the Plain, destroyed by fire and brimstone, because of their terrible wickedness. Here it was that Lot looked with selfish eyes upon the then fruitful, well-watered district, and chose to make his home here, leaving his uncle Abraham to move farther on. Here it was that Lot's wife, clinging—woman-like—to her home, looked back and became a pillar of salt. Out yonder, in the far distance, stands the spot marked out as the prison of John the Baptist. Sitting at the



head of this lake, we noticed that its waters were driven in by the wind, and rolled on the beach, just like the waters of any other lake we had ever seen. And when I plunged into it, expecting to swim like a cork, and to find it impossible to sink, I found in those respects that it was much like the waters of any other lake into which I have ever plunged. Other men may have found it so dense that they could not sink in it, and so buoyant that they could almost walk on its surface ; but that was not my experience. I could walk in it, and did ; I could sink in it, and, to my sorrow, did. I expected, when I walked into it, to feel as if I were walking into a bath of needles, but I didn't ; I just felt as I always do when I enter the sea for a bath and a swim. Whatever others have experienced in its waters, the above is an accurate description of mine, the guide-books notwithstanding.

This remarkable lake is the most wonderful known to man. It lies at the lowest depth below the sea that we know of. Its surface is about 1,300 feet below the level of the Mediterranean. It is forty-six miles long, and between nine and ten miles at its greatest width. Its depth varies, being somewhat deeper in the rainy season than in the dry summer weather. The average depth is about 1,000 feet, and the area 400 square miles.

Into this strange lake pour the waters of the Jordan, and there are other tributaries. There is no outlet for its waters—at least, none has ever been discovered. It is kept at or about its present level by evaporation.

Various names have been given to it. It has been

called the "Sea of the Plain," the "Salt Sea"; now it is generally called the "Dead Sea." The lofty mountains which lie beyond it are most attractive and beautiful in the clear bright sunlight. Among the peaks in the distance yonder rises Mount Nebo, to which Moses came to view the promised land when he had led forth the hosts of Israel from the bondage of Egypt, having trained and disciplined them ready for entering into the good land. One day, when he was one hundred and twenty years old, he ascended yonder mountain, and stood to look at the land he was forbidden to enter. The fruit had ripened under his fostering care, but another was to pluck it. The cup was full of blessing, but when he was about to drink it, it was dashed from his lips. I do not wonder that he begged to be allowed to cross the Jordan and enter the land of Canaan. There, with the prize before his very eyes, he died and was buried, no man knows where.

From the Dead Sea to that part of the Jordan known as the Pilgrim's Bathing-place is about an hour's ride across a level plain. You will notice the little mounds, how they are white with the salt condensed from the spray and moisture of the Dead Sea.

And now we have reached the Jordan, the most remarkable river known to man. It has been my good fortune to visit and see some of the great and historic rivers of the world. I have crossed and recrossed the Seine at Paris, and have walked by the side of the Arno at Florence. I have gazed upon the Tiber at Rome, and have seen the Hudson River of America. I have

visited the Niagara in Canada, and have sailed on the noble St. Lawrence River. I have glided over the surface of the ancient Nile in Egypt, and have sat by the banks of the beautiful Abana at Damascus. But not any nor all of these gave me such pleasure, nor awakened such gratitude and feelings of devotion, as my first sight of the Jordan. The Christian who for the first time stands by its banks, or walks into its waters, has kindled within him such emotions as the sight of no other river in the universe can awaken. How is this ? It is not remarkable for its greatness. In this it is far excelled by our own old Father Thames. For beauty it is not to be compared with the Abana. No great cities adorn its banks, nor is it made attractive by the beautiful residences of the rich. The commerce of nations is not carried on its bosom, as on our own muddy Mersey or Humber. Ships bearing the standards of the peoples of the world never navigate its waters. And yet it has a greater place in the affections of Christian men everywhere than all other rivers put together. Its sanctity lies in the fact that its waters have been made for ever sacred by the feet of Him who was by John declared to be the Lamb of God, and who was proclaimed by a voice from heaven to be the Son of God. Standing here, at this Pilgrim's Bathing-place, visited by tens of thousands of the devout of all lands, let us notice some of its Scriptural associations.

When Jacob had deceived his father, at the instigation of his mother, and thus obtained the blessing which belonged to his brother, he was obliged to flee from his



home. Making his way towards his uncle Laban's, he crossed the Jordan, and perhaps at this very spot. I can see him in imagination, a fugitive, all his property consisting of a staff. And in twenty - one years afterward he again crossed this Jordan, not a poor and penniless wanderer, but a man of considerable property, with a large household, and he a much wiser and better man.

When the Almighty called His servant Moses home to rest, and Joshua had taken command of the hosts of Israel, he was commanded to go forward to possess the Promised Land. Between them and the land they were to possess came this Jordan. But at the command of their leader they went forward. The priests, bearing the sacred Ark of the Covenant, came to the margin of the river. As soon as their feet touched the water, a passage was made for the whole host, which went over in safety. There, not far from the spot on which we stand, Joshua erected his memorial pillar of the twelve stones taken from the bed of the river.

When Absalom, the son of David, was in rebellion against his father, trying to grasp his sceptre and take his throne, the King made good his escape from Jerusalem. He passed over the plains of Jericho, and crossed the Jordan, perhaps at this very place.

When Naaman, the great Syrian soldier, came to Israel to seek a cure for his leprosy, the prophet of Israel sent him to dip in Jordan seven times. With wounded pride and injured vanity we know how the hero of a hundred battles turned away in a rage, and

despised the waters of the Jordan as he thought of the beauty of the rivers of his own country. But when the common sense of his servants prevailed with him, he determined at least to try the dipping. Driving across the plain, he stood, perhaps where we stand, to prepare for entering the water. See him as he dips in the water time after time. At the seventh dip the scales have gone, and the white, leprous flesh becomes soft and clean as that of a little child.

Elijah, the prophet of God, had his residence at Gilgal yonder, two hours' ride away. When the time drew near that he was to enter the chariot of fire and go to the land of rest, he started for this appointed place, accompanied by Elisha, his chosen successor. When at the Jordan, the prophet rolled up his mantle and struck the water, when a passage was found for him and his companion. Near to the opposite bank of this river he ascended to heaven, first casting his mantle upon Elisha.

But these incidents from the Old Testament pale before those of the New. It was somewhere near this very spot that John the Baptist carried on his great work, when all Judea and Jerusalem came out to his ministry. It was here he was baptizing when the leaders of the people from Jerusalem came to inquire of him as to his mission. It was here that He came of whom John was but the forerunner, and at whose baptism the heavens opened, and the Holy Spirit, in the form of a dove, descended upon Him. Well may this river be sacred to Christian hearts. Well may men long to see its banks and bathe in its waters.

This particular part of the river is that to which vast numbers of pilgrims, thousands of them, come year by year. They bathe in the waters, men and women together, thankful that they can enter the river at the very place where the children of Israel crossed, and where the Crucified One was baptized. There is a place farther north which is pointed out as the actual crossing-place, but tradition has long fixed upon the spot at which we stand.

Apart altogether from its sacred associations, the Jordan is in many respects most remarkable. It takes its rise on one side of the noble Mount Hermon, and flows all through Palestine to the Dead Sea, in which it loses itself. It divides the Holy Land into two parts, nearly equal, known as East of the Jordan and West of the Jordan. If the length of the river could be taken in a straight line, it would be about 100 miles ; but it so twists and winds about that its length is greatly increased. Between Lake Galilee and the Dead Sea, a distance of 60 miles, the length of the river is increased to nearly 200 miles ; and during the course of that 60 miles the river has a fall of no less than 60 feet. In its course the river runs through two lakes, Lake Merom and Lake Galilee, and flows, as we have seen, into a third lake, the Dead Sea. At the waters of Lake Merom the river is a little above the level of the Mediterranean Sea ; when it reaches Lake Galilee, it is 680 feet *below* that sea ; and at the Dead Sea, almost 1,300 feet *below* the Mediterranean.

I need not stop to tell you how this river has entered



into much of our sacred poetry, and especially into the hymns we sing. Here is one :

“ On Jordan’s stormy banks I stand,  
And cast a wistful eye  
To Canaan’s fair and happy land,  
Where my possessions lie.”

And now we come to Jericho.

The Jericho of Joshua’s time was a strong and important city, one of the oldest of the land, and was the first which Joshua had to conquer when he entered Palestine. It seems to have been fortified by massive walls, so thick that residences could be built upon them, for we read that Rahab, who protected the spies, had her house on the wall. The city was possessed of considerable wealth, for one soldier in Joshua’s army was able to seize a large wedge of gold, 200 shekels of silver, and a costly and beautiful Babylonish garment ; whilst Joshua greatly enriched the treasury of the Lord by the abundance of silver, gold, and valuable metal utensils which he took from the wreck of the city.

The Jericho of the Saviour’s time was a place of some importance, and rather large population. The two are not exactly the same, but the sites of the ancient and the more modern are so close that we may regard the two as practically one.

Jericho lies at the western side of a great and extensive plain, once rich and fertile, and on the eastern side of which is the River Jordan. In miles it is about six distant from the river, and probably about twenty-two from Jerusalem. It is under the shadow of a

range of mountains, now bleak and bare and uninviting. One of these mountains, rising to a considerable height, with its bleak and fierce-looking side towards the plain, is called Quarantania. Tradition says that this is the scene of the Temptation, in which the Saviour had that fierce struggle with the powers of evil, whose descriptions have so perplexed the readers of the Gospels. What truth there may be in the tradition which fixes this as the site we do not know, but we do not for a moment hesitate to say that the mountain looks savage and wild enough to have been the actual spot.

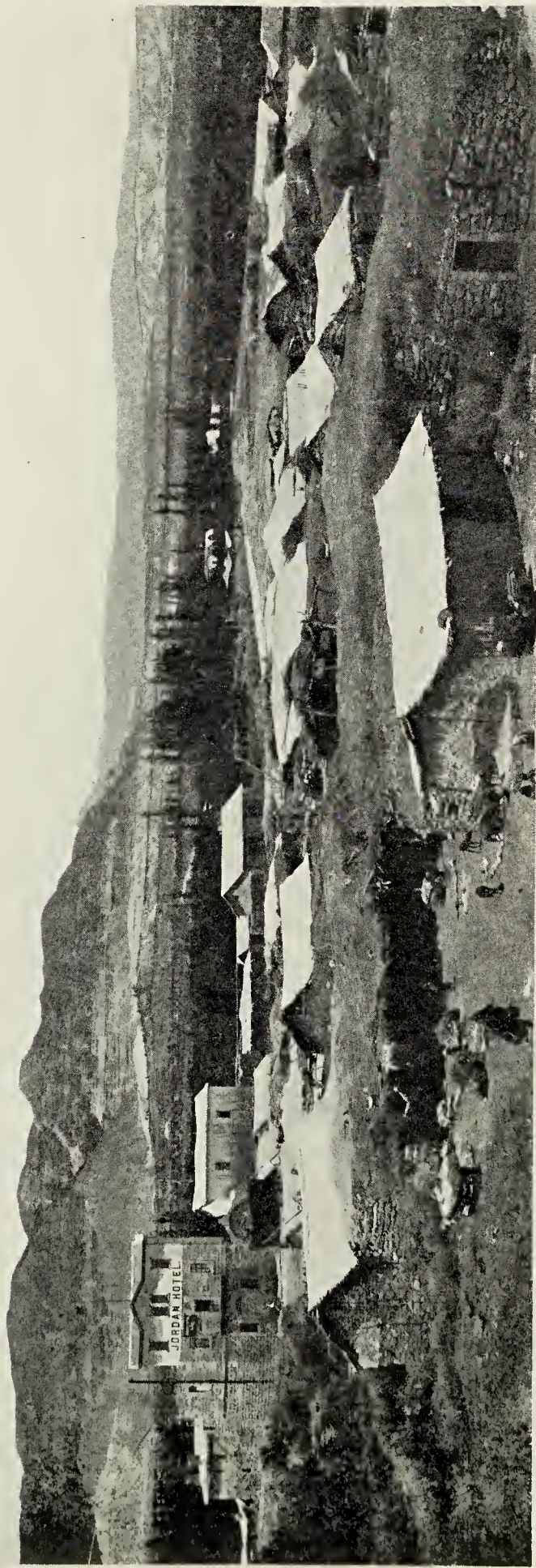
Anyone who visits Jericho now will look in vain for the "City of Palm-trees" of the ancient world, though there are a few palms to be seen, and if he expects to find a town such as Christ saw he will be disappointed. Located in one of the most fertile plains, with an abundance of water from Elijah's Spring and the Brook Cherith, it is at once one of the poorest, dirtiest, and most disreputable places in the whole land, from Dan to Beersheba. The hovels in which the few wretched inhabitants live cannot be called houses.

The Biblical associations of Jericho are numerous, suggestive, and interesting. When Joshua crossed the Jordan as leader of the Lord's hosts, this was the first city which opposed his progress. It was in sight of its strongholds he pitched the tents of Israel. It was around its walls he and his people marched day after day until the seventh, when, in the midst of a great shout, the walls fell down flat. It was here that he





*Photo. by American Colony, Jerusalem.*  
 THE DEAD SEA. HARDLY ANY GREEN THING GROWS AROUND THIS GREAT SHEET OF SALT WATER.



*Photo. by American Colony, Jerusalem.*  
 JERICHO OF TO-DAY.





and his people celebrated the first Passover feast ever held in the land.

During the sojourn of the people in the wilderness, on the other side of the Jordan and on this side, until they reached Jericho, God miraculously fed them with manna from heaven. It was here at Jericho that they first ate of the old corn of the land. The manna, that bread made in the heavens by celestial fingers, and which had sustained their host for so long a time, ceased when they came to this place. In presence of the cornfields and threshing-floors they no longer needed special food for special emergencies, so God ceased to send it.

It was here at Jericho that the woman called Rahab lived who hid the spies, and who was saved by Joshua when the city fell, and who, according to the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, was saved by faith. We know that she married Salmon—who was of the children of the princes of Judah—became the mother of Boaz, who married Ruth, and was thus one of the ancestors of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Elijah, the prophet of Israel, that man of force and vigour, had his residence here, and perhaps had a theological college for training young men for the office of the ministry of God. He left this place to cross the Jordan yonder, six miles away, when he was about to enter his chariot of fire and pass into the land beyond.

Our Saviour Himself visited the city, and left in it traces of His Divine power in the miracles He wrought. Two, if not three, blind men here had their eyes opened

by Christ. One of these was Bartimæus, a beggar, who seems to have had a true conception of the person and rank of Christ, for he addressed Him as "Son of David," and had such faith in Him that all the efforts of the crowd to silence him proved of no avail.

It was here at Jericho that remarkable man Zacchæus mounted the tree by the wayside, that he might get a sight of the passing Christ. But, to his amazement, he discovered that Christ was not in any particular haste to get by, even though there was a despised publican in the tree. Calling the man by name, as if He knew him well, He declared His intention of accepting hospitality at the house of the hated tax-gatherer. These are some of the Biblical associations of this historic city, whose walls fell at the shout of Joshua's men.

We must look at Elisha's Fountain before we start for Jerusalem. This is a natural spring at the foot of the mountain. The way to it lies through a garden, with trees which make it a pleasant walk. This is believed by some to be the very same fountain whose waters Elisha healed (2 Kings ii. 19-22).

A little above this spring there is a mound from which a most glorious outlook is obtained. In the background the lofty mountain called Quarantania, the scene of the temptation of Jesus; at our feet stretches a long range of corn and other fields, made fertile and beautiful by the abundance of water from the spring; away in the distance stretch the mountains of Edom, which lie beyond the Jordan; southward the Dead Sea; while northward runs the Valley



of the Jordan. It is, indeed, a fine outlook. And it may well be that we are here on the site of the ancient Jericho that Joshua overthrew and conquered.

On our way up to Jerusalem we must stop to look at three places. A few miles from Jericho we get a fine look into a great gorge called the Raven's Nest. In the sides of the hill monks have created a monastery, not unlike the monastery at Marsaba. This is known as the Monastery of Elias. Tradition says that here, in this valley, where runs the Brook Cherith, Elijah was fed by the ravens in those olden times of which the Bible speaks. Of late years some have said that Elijah was fed, not by birds such as we call ravens, but by a tribe of people called Ravens. The view down the great gorge is most impressive.

The second remarkable place is the Virgin's Fountain. This is a perennial spring flowing out from the foot of a hill, on the way up to the Holy City. Here Jesus and His companions may have stopped to drink, just as the many pilgrims do now who travel between Jericho and Jerusalem.

The third remarkable place is the Good Samaritan Inn. This inn is about half-way between Jericho and Jerusalem. Most travellers rest here. It is thought to be near the place where the man passing from Jerusalem to Jericho fell among thieves. The way from Jerusalem to Jericho, curiously enough, is still a dangerous road to travel. I have gone it many times in both directions, and always with an official of the Government, and sometimes with the servants carrying firearms.

## CHAPTER XVI

### JERUSALEM TO JACOB'S WELL

THERE are several ways by which Nazareth may now be reached from Jerusalem. The easiest of all, and the most modern, and, I think, the most frequently used, is Jaffa to Haifa, thence for about twenty-three miles over a fairly good road to Nazareth.

Those who follow this plan will leave Jerusalem by train for Jaffa. Thence the same day they will go by steamer to Haifa. From Haifa carriages will convey the pilgrims to the end of the journey. By this easy and cheap method of travel the pilgrim will leave Jerusalem one day, and get lunch in Nazareth the next ; and if he desires to travel hard and far, he may even reach Tiberias in the evening of the day after he leaves Jerusalem. Or he may take train at Haifa, instead of carriage, and alight at Samach, a station at the foot of Lake Galilee. Here he can hire a boat on the lake, and by hard sailing and rowing may be in Tiberias in time for dinner the day after he started from the Holy City. From Tiberias he may journey to Nazareth by carriage.

The most romantic, and in many respects the most interesting and informing, of all the ways of travelling

the distance between the two cities is the slower and harder method of travelling on horseback, and sleeping in tents. This is the most expensive of all the journeys. To those who can afford the time, and to whom expense does not so much matter, this is the kind of journey to be taken.

I am always glad that on my first visit I rode on horseback through the whole land. Railways had not then invaded the country, few roads were made, and carriages in the country districts were unknown. Indeed, I travelled over districts and large tracts of country over which no wheel had ever been, and over which in these days no wheel can go. I intend to take you the way I went. It is the most deeply interesting of all, and will bring us to the chief places. In this chapter we start from Jerusalem to Jacob's Well.

We leave Jerusalem in the early morning. In my diary I find the following words, written on the day I left the city :

“We were rung up at 5.30, and before we had finished dressing down came the tent. It is now 6.15, and we are assembling for breakfast. As soon as it is over we are off for Bethel, the first stage of the journey to Jacob's Well.”

It may interest you if I explain what is meant by the “tent coming down.” It was the rule among us that, at whatever time we were called to rise in the morning—and it was usually early—we were allowed half an hour in which to dress. If we were not out of the tent by the end of the half-hour, it was let down upon us. There were two reasons for this. One was



that the servants and the rest of the passengers seemed to enjoy the sight of the discomfort of those who, by their dilatoriness, were buried in the canvas of the tent. The second and most pressing reason was that the camp servants had to pull down the tents, pack all up, and as early as possible take their departure to the next camping-place. And when you remember that everything had to be carried on the backs of horses, mules, and donkeys, including even the kitchen grate, or what can more properly be called the cooking-range, you will understand that they had not much time to lose. When we rode into camp at the end of each day, we usually found the tents, in which we had slept the previous night, erected and ready to receive us, and a cup of tea ready prepared to refresh us.

Before we turn our backs upon the Holy City I will give you my impressions, written on the spot, the night before I left it. I only need ask you to remember that the impressions were written twenty years ago. I have made eight visits to Jerusalem since then, and whilst there have been many improvements in those years, the first impressions are some of them such as I would write to-day. I copy them quite unaltered, and in their original wording.

#### “ IMPRESSIONS OF JERUSALEM.

“ 1. The view of the city from the Mount of Olives will never fade from my memory.

“ 2. The feelings I experienced at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre were such as I fear I may never have again.

“ 3. I was considerably impressed by a visit I made to Mount Olivet by moonlight.

“ 4. Inside the city I am struck by the crowded, narrow, dirty streets.

“ 5. Sanitary science seems unknown, and Jerusalem is a city of supreme stinks.” (I should not use this language now.)

“ 6. I marvel to see the multitudes of men in the streets everywhere—many of whom have nothing to do, and do it in a way to satisfy the most lazy.

“ 7. I am impressed with the idea that the Orientals take things easy. Time seems of no consequence.

“ 8. I have the impression that the tone of morality among the Jews and Mahommedans is good.

“ 9. I have come to the conclusion that the men have the best of it; the women seem to work hard, and there is not a fifth of the number of women in the streets and lanes that there are men.

“ 10. I am impressed with the number of people of all ages who are either blind or have bad eyes.

“ 11. Jerusalem is a city of beggars of all sorts and sizes, from the naked child to the rotting leper.

“ 12. The multitude of moneychangers impressed me.

“ 13. I am impressed with the multitude of poor people.

“ 14. It is striking to see the numbers of old men, especially Jews, many of whom have come as pilgrims, that their bodies may be buried in the consecrated soil of Jerusalem.

“ 15. I have come to the conclusion that for comfort, health, and happiness, the toilers are not so well off in any land as dear old England.

“ It is now 11.30 p.m., and we are to rise at 5.30, so I must say good-night.”

I could easily write a volume on the things suggested by these impressions, but I must pass on.

Now we are off. As we leave the suburbs of Jerusalem, I must ask you to turn aside for a few minutes, that we may pay a visit to the so-called Tombs of the Kings. These are huge cuttings into the solid rock. They are ancient tombs, but they are not what their name seems to indicate. The Tombs of the Kings were on Mount Zion. These excavations are a powerful illustration of the expense to which the ancients often went in making tombs in which to bury the dead. The Pyramids of Egypt bear witness to this fact. To get to the actual recesses in which the bodies at the Tombs of the Kings were placed—and there are some seventy of these—we pass down a flight of twenty-eight broad steps, into a court 90 feet long and 80 feet broad, all cut from the solid rock.

We pass over Mount Scopus, from which we get our last view of Jerusalem—and a fine one it is, too. The men of the army of Titus probably camped somewhere near here, and laid plans for besieging and destroying the city.

The first place of real importance at which we arrive and halt is Bethel. This place would not be worth the time and toil of a visit for any virtues which it possesses itself. It is a poor little place, and, as is the case in most of the country villages of Palestine, its people are poor. There are now some four or five hundred inhabitants.

The associations of the place, however, are such as to make its name ever memorable. All about it and



around it may be seen traces of a beauty and greatness which it does not now possess.

At Bethel the patriarch Abraham, father of the great Hebrew people, erected an altar. And, later, after a sojourn in Egypt, when he grew rich in cattle, and silver, and gold, he returned to Bethel. It was here that Jeroboam, one of the wicked kings of the ten tribes of Israel, set up one of the two golden calves which he made, in the hope of attracting the men of Judah to the idolatrous worship.

But the incident which of all others has made Bethel famous is the fact that it was here that Jacob, when he was obliged to flee from his home, when he had tricked his brother Esau out of the father's blessing, rested for a night. Tired, wearied, hungry, and perhaps footsore, he came to this place. When the sun set, he found himself a homeless wanderer. No roof over him but the wide arch of the starry sky ; no bed but the earth ; no pillow but a stone. Sad was his plight, and yet he slept and had a marvellous dream. The whole story of the dream is told in the most beautiful language by the ancient writer of Genesis, in the twenty-eighth chapter :

“ And Jacob went out from Beersheba, and went toward Haran.

“ And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set ; and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and he lay down in that place to sleep.

“ And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up

on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven : and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it.

“ And, behold, the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac : the land whereon thou liest, to thee I will give it, and to thy seed ;

“ And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south : and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

“ And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again to this land ; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.

“ And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the Lord is in this place ; and I knew it not.”

After lunch at Bethel I lay down, with a white umbrella over my head to keep off the sun. I took a stone for my pillow, and was soon fast asleep. I went to sleep hoping that I, too, might dream at Bethel. I rarely ever sleep without dreaming ; but, strange to say, when I slept at Bethel that time, it was to enjoy a dreamless sleep !

There is a gloriously grand view to be obtained from the hill just a little way up.

The road from Bethel to Jacob's Well lies through one of the roughest and perhaps worst roads in the whole of Palestine, and that is saying a good deal, for I imagine some of the worst roads in the world are in the Holy Land. The bit at the Robbers' Vale and

the Robbers' Fountain is especially bad. And yet the district is delightful, and at some parts through which we pass simply magnificent.

We soon reach Shiloh, the once famous religious centre of Israel. Standing amid the ruins at this place, it is hard to believe that it was here, where now a few poor and miserable dwellings and dilapidated buildings stand, that the sacred Ark of the Jewish people had its resting-place for some 400 years. It was here that Joshua divided the land among the tribes of Israel. You may almost fancy you see him standing on some raised rostrum, unrolling some ancient and imperfect map of the country, and telling off the portion for each tribe. It was here, too, that the Tabernacle—that sacred tent of the Israelites—stood, which was according to the pattern shown to Moses on the sacred Mount when he was the leader of the people.

Old Eli ministered here in the Tabernacle. And it was to Shiloh that the boy Samuel, dedicated to the service of God in the priesthood by his mother, was brought to reside. That pretty story about the new coat which the mother took to her boy, on the yearly visit, has its centre here at Shiloh. That woman, like many of the women of ancient Israel, was not only a mother, but seems to have been of a poetic turn of mind. Let anyone who doubts this turn to 1 Sam. ii. 1-10, and there you will see a little of the intellectual power of this woman.

In the third chapter of 1 Samuel there is that beautiful account of the Call of Samuel, with which every



British boy is familiar. I know no more delightful story of the way in which the Divine Voice may speak to a boy than is stated here in the chapter I name. And it all took place at Shiloh, where we now stand. It was at Shiloh that the sons of Eli did so badly that their aged father was greatly distressed at the wickedness they practised.

The downfall of Shiloh is recorded in 1 Sam. iv. The Philistines were at war with Israel. There was a great slaughter of the Israelites, and the Ark of God, which they had carried into the camp, was captured and carried off by the enemy, as were also the two sons of Eli. The old man, who was now ninety-eight years of age, sat on a seat by the way, waiting anxiously for news of the battle. His eye was dim, and he was feeble. When he heard that the Ark of the Lord was lost, he fell back, broke his neck, and died. From that time, in which the Ark was lost from Shiloh, the place seems to have almost passed out of history.

The ride from Shiloh to Jacob's Well is not the least interesting of the many beautiful bits we get in Palestine. In my diary I find these suggestive words :

“After a ride of some hours between and over the Mountains of Ephraim we got a sight of snow-capped Hermon in the far distance. These vales are remarkable. At some places it seems as if evil spirits had been quarrelling, and had torn the rocks from their seats, and hurled them at each other into the valley.”

And now at last we reach Jacob's Well, the well of Samaria. In my own mind I have never doubted that here, at least, we are at a spot to which our Lord came





*Photo. by American Colony, Jerusalem*

SHECHEM AND MOUNT GERIZIM.





when on His way from Jerusalem to Galilee. And if there were no Biblical associations connected with this well, the district would be famous. But it abounds with memories that are sacred. I can do but little else than just tell you of a few of them. Several of the Patriarchs had a connection with this district. The well itself lies at the entrance of a lovely valley. As you look along it there are two mountains which rise up abruptly from the plain. On your left, Mount Gerizim, and on the right Mount Ebal. The former of these is the "mount of blessing," the latter the "mount of cursing." On Mount Gerizim the ancient Samaritans had their rival temple, in which they carried on their worship. You will remember that the Samaritan woman who talked with Jesus at the well said : " Our fathers worshipped in this mountain. Ye say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship."

There are not many of the descendants of those Samaritans. They were once a numerous people ; they have dwindled down until there are not more than 200 of them now left. They still carry on their own worship. They are still a separate people. They still intermarry ; but in spite of all, they are dying out, and may soon be gone altogether. A visit to their little synagogue is interesting. Here, for long centuries, they have possessed one of the oldest manuscript copies of the early Books of the Bible known in the world.

Close by this well of Jacob is the reputed grave of Joseph—that Joseph who became the great ruler in

Egypt during the years of plenty, who so wisely provided for the years of barrenness. The present building over the tomb is comparatively modern, and stands in an enclosure. Like the site of the well, there is but little reason to doubt the genuineness.

It is worthy of note that this tomb is venerated by Jews, Samaritans, Christians, and Moslems alike. Not far from the well is the village of Sychar, and farther along the pleasant valley is the town of Nablus, anciently called Shechem. Abraham, Jacob, Joshua, and Jesus all had some connection with this place. It is one of the largest cities of Palestine. I do not think that the inhabitants have much love for Christians. They may not now be as bigoted as formerly. On my first visit they did not give us the kindest welcome. Not a few of them were discourteous and rather rude. Some few stones were thrown at us, but they were mostly children who threw them. The manufacture of soap is carried on at Nablus. I wondered what they did with it all, for they did not appear to use much of it at home. Perhaps it was mostly exported as soon as made. I was told, not long ago, that the inhabitants of Nablus numbered over 20,000. But you must always be slow in accepting the statements as to numbers of population of any place under Turkish rule.

I wish to detain you a few moments more at the well. You will get a better view of it to-day than you could when I first saw it. Then the mouth was just an open place, with rubbish mounds around it. I sat on the edge, and gave a boy a piece of silver to get a

rope and draw water from the well for me. In these days the well, and a considerable portion of land besides, has been enclosed by the Greeks. All the rubbish which was the accumulation of ages has been cleared away. The old masonry about the well has been laid bare. In the fourth century—that century in which so many of the sacred sites were cleared, and so many churches erected—a Christian church stood over this well. In the Middle Ages another church was placed here. Some remains of this medieval church have been laid bare, showing the floor of the church of the crusaders.

The fourth chapter of John will be interesting at this point :

“ And He must needs go through Samaria.

“ Then cometh He to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.

“ Now Jacob's Well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with His journey, sat thus on the well : and it was about the sixth hour.

“ Then cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water : Jesus said unto her, Give Me to drink.”

This was a remarkable event, which took place in a delightful district, under circumstances that are as interesting as they are important. There sat the Saviour, talking with a woman, she a Samaritan, He a Jew. Down there are the same fields of corn that, now as then, ripen to harvest. Yonder rises up the bold head of Mount Gerizim, while opposite stands Mount Ebal. I know no Biblical narrative so absorbing.



Whether you consider the preacher, the audience, the place, or the subject, all are of abiding interest. Using the well as an illustration for a higher theme, Jesus said :

“Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again : but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst, but the water I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

“The woman saith unto Him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.”

Since then thousands of men and women have learned that the fountains of living water which God gives do not run dry, as do the fountains of the world. You will notice from the fourth chapter of John that it was on this occasion, while talking with the woman, that Jesus declared Himself to be the Messiah.

## CHAPTER XVII

### AT JACOB'S WELL

THE deeply interesting conversation which Jesus had with the woman at Jacob's Well had startling developments. It led to the warm welcome which the Samaritans gave to Jesus. This was a welcome which must have touched His heart. At Jerusalem, the capital, among the men of His own nation, He had addressed the people, and backed up His teaching by miracle, yet little or no impression was made. The proud Jew, wrapped in the prejudices of his race, blinded by one-sided conceptions of the prophecies, enslaved by his traditions, and held in bondage by his ritual, had paid but little heed to Jesus and His teaching. Though the Sun of Righteousness, which would have healed and saved the nation from its impending doom, arose over Jerusalem, the people chose to dwell in darkness, superstition, and death, vainly believing that they, and they alone, were in possession of life and light.

When He appeared among the Samaritans, a people alien in race and sympathy, and from the standpoint of the Jew a people accursed, and not at all to be tolerated or associated with, He met with the warmest welcome—a welcome which seems to have greatly

touched His heart, elated His spirits, and gladdened His soul.

While Jesus was talking with the woman at the well, His disciples were away to the city to buy food. When they returned and found their Master holding conversation with a woman, and she a Samaritan, they were struck dumb with amazement and horror. If the lofty heights of Gerizim had suddenly been loosed from their foundations, and had crossed the valley to exchange places with those of Ebal—if the earth had suddenly opened and swallowed up all the hated inhabitants of Sychar, and every other Samaritan city—these Jewish companions of our Lord would not have been more astonished and dumbfounded than they were to see Him talk with this woman.

In striking contrast with the amazement of the disciples stands the enthusiasm of the woman. Whilst they marvelled, she looked on in wonder ; if they were shocked and grieved, she was startled but pleased ; and if they saw cause for sorrow, she was glad with a new-found joy. She had seen not merely a Jew, but a prophet ; and not only a prophet, but One who, though a stranger to her, had held up to her the mirror and allowed her to see herself as never before. She was in the presence of One greater than the teachers of her race, even the Messiah Himself. Her ears had heard the statement, first made to a mortal creature, that this Nazarene was the Messiah for whom the world had long waited. And all this filled her with an enthusiasm which made her anxious to publish the fact. John tells us that she left her water-pot, and



went her way into the city. What was a water-pot to her in comparison with the living water of which she had just heard ? What was that compared to the news of the new-found Messiah, news of whom she hastened to publish ?

Full of zeal, she went to the city to seek her friends and neighbours, to declare unto them her new-found joy.

“Come,” said she—“come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did ; is not this the Christ ?” When the Light of life enters a man’s heart, it soon makes its presence manifest, as in the case of this woman. When Jesus of Nazareth met Saul, the persecutor, near Damascus, and unhorsed the proud rider, bringing him in humility to the dust, He put true light in his heart, and Saul the persecutor became Paul the preacher ; the proud man became humble ; the sinner became the saint, and went everywhere telling of the Saviour who had delivered him, and made the chief of sinners into the chief of saints. When Christ cast the evil spirits out of the Gadarene, and put His own in the place, the man went off to tell his neighbours how great things God had done for him. And so this Samaritan, forgetful of all else for the while, sought the people, and said : “Come, come !”

Among the early missionaries of Jesus this woman must always have a place. Of all the thousands who since then have gone forth among the people at home and abroad to tell men of Jesus Christ, this Samaritan will ever be placed among the first who had that distinguished honour. Nor did she tell her story in vain.

Though a woman, not of the best repute hitherto, she went forth in a spirit of such confidence that the city was roused, the people came out to see Jesus, and many believed on Him, and came to know Him as Christ, the Saviour of the world.

Here we see how Divine Providence can use the feeblest instrumentalities to accomplish His wise and gracious purposes. This Samaritan woman was used to bring a rich harvest of souls to the garner of God. And in the unfolding of God's plans and purposes it has often been so.

It was a little girl whom God used to point Naaman to the true prophet of God. A Hebrew youth from an Egyptian prison was set up as the saviour of the land of the Pharaohs. It was a man from the sheepfold who became the great King and the great poet of Israel. It was a man at the tail of the plough, Elisha, upon whom the prophetic mantle of Elijah fell. It was an agricultural labourer who became the prophet we know as Amos. Paul was a tent-maker. Some of the disciples of Jesus were fishermen. Luther was the son of a miner, Bunyan a tinker, and the Lord Himself a working man. So when He used this Samaritan woman as one of His earliest successful preachers of the Gospel, He was magnifying His grace, His providence, and His wisdom. The same love can use feeble instrumentalities still.

The joy of the Samaritans was only equalled by that of the Saviour. Gladly they opened their city, their houses, and their hearts to receive Him. As gladly did He talk with them, instruct them, help them, rest

with them, and share their hospitality. It was His meat and drink to do His Father's will. It was the Father's will to save the world. So when Jesus saw the crowds of Samaritans coming down the valley, making straight for the well, His soul was elated beyond description. Hungry and tired as He was, He forgot His fatigue and need of food in His joy of heart. His companions, ignorant of His satisfaction of spirit, rapture of soul, and knowing how tired and hungry He must be, began to speculate and wonder if someone had outdone them in catering for His wants, and supplied Him with food in their absence.

The sight of the coming souls down there on those fields in which the sower had recently done his work, and in which the fresh green shoots of spring corn were pushing through the rich soil, made Christ think of waving fields of ripened corn, ready for the spiritual harvest. He forgot His cold reception, if not rejection, at Jerusalem some time before ; He forgot the malice and hatred of the leaders of the Jewish authorities which had probably cut short His popular preaching in close proximity to John Baptist, and constrained Him to depart for Galilee, to which place He was now hastening to open up His great mission in the northern province. He saw these Samaritans coming to Him as some of the first of the countless millions who should crowd around His standard, flock to Him like doves to their windows, and share in the full glory of the ransomed of the Lord. Two or three years later He exclaimed : " My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." But here His soul was filled with joy.



The Jews rejected the Saviour, the Samaritans received Him. His own countrymen cast Him out, the strangers took Him in. Into this open door the Lord passed to spend two days with those willing to hear Him. Where He stayed, and with whom, we know not, and we are as ignorant of all He said and did. What we do know is that His words carried conviction, and the Samaritans believed on Him (John iv. 39-42).

I am quite sure that you would all like to find the site of the house where He stayed, and to know how He spake to the Samaritans—this we may never know ; we must move on. But before passing from this district, with all its interesting associations, I must give you a few sentences from my old diary :

“ *In Camp at Nablus, March 20, 1891.*

“ 5.30. Breakfast at 6.15. To horse at seven.

“ We had a curious experience during the night. One of the Mahommedans from the town fired off a gun near our tents. The guard of soldiers who had charge of our camp rushed after him, and soon it seemed as if the whole town had come down upon us. However, no damage was done.

“ Another fine morning.

“ During the night the jackals made a fearful noise.”

## CHAPTER XVIII

### SAMARIA AND GALILEE

FROM Nablus to the town of Samaria we pass through one of the most beautiful districts of Palestine. Our way lies through the most lovely vales beautified by the many streams which make rich and fruitful the generous soil of this part of the land. In contrast with Judea, these vales and hills we now go through show up to great advantage. In Judea, the hills, for the most part, are bleak, bare, and wind-swept. Some of them have not a green thing growing upon them, and some of the valleys are filled with stones to such an extent that the fields which the natives seek to cultivate seem to have more stones than corn. Here, as we travel towards Samaria, everything is different. True, the road might be better—some day perhaps it will be—but the outlook will not, I think, be much improved.

Nothing in the whole of Palestine is more beautiful than these parts, and we have yet to visit and see some delightful places. Villages perched on the hillsides. Olive groves over the rounded hills. Rich gardens with choice fruit-trees in them—figs, olives, vines, and many others. Natural beauty and glory can here be seen in a way which makes glad the heart of the

observant beholder. In about an hour from Shechem, as we climb the hill, among other scenes of beauty which will live in the memory for ever, we get a view of Sebustieh, or Samaria. Yonder it is, amid a great and grand amphitheatre of hills—a picture as seen from this place—about a mile away.

The inhabitants here, as at Nablus, have not a very good character. I do not think, however, that either here, or at Nablus, or even at Hebron, the natives are as bad as some travellers have tried to make them out to be. I suppose it would be true to say that in Palestine, as in many other parts of the world, civility begets civility—kindness begets kindness. Good behaviour usually secures such in return. Dr. Livingstone lived long in Africa, and never had occasion to shoot the natives. Others have travelled that land, and shot not a few. There are some travellers that I have seen who might even learn lessons of good manners from the ignorant natives of Palestine. I have paid nine visits to the Holy Land, and have been to several of the cities which have notoriously bad reputations, and my first real insult has yet to come. I have been out in the streets at night, sat in their dirty cafés, listened to their rude music and their songs, sipped coffee with them, visited some of the hovels in which they live, and multiply, and sicken, and die, and have never had half the rudeness offered to me that I have in London. You must not take for granted *all* that is said about the badness, the bigotry, and the cruelty, and the wickedness of the inhabitants of some of the cities to which I am taking you.



Of course, if you misbehave in their places of worship, you must expect the people to be angry. If they came to our churches or chapels, and behaved as I have seen some Christians do in their mosques, we should not only expel them, but probably bring them before the magistrate. If we mock at their customs and ways, we must expect that they will not treat us over-gently. Why should they? If we seek to take liberties in those directions in which they are most easily provoked, we cannot complain if they resent our freedom and threaten our safety.

How can I make you understand all about the glorious past of Samaria? It is interesting to see it even in its ruined position. But it is far, far more so if we think of what it has been. If I can help you, in your imagination, to rebuild its palaces, goodly houses, and strongholds, you will be pleased. If I can assist you to repeople its streets, its houses, its great mansions with the proud, pleasure-loving men and women who once lived here, you will be in an Eastern world. And if I help you to see the great armies which came to besiege it and try to destroy it, you will be glad you have come to visit it, even though you will be disheartened with the poverty and suffering of the lepers you will see crouched outside the massive gates of the city in those old times.

What I know of ancient Samaria I get chiefly from Josephus,\* the Bible, and personal visitation.

When the kingdom over which David and Solomon reigned as one whole was divided at the rupture under

\* See "Josephus," books viii. and ix., etc.

Rehoboam, Solomon's son, Jerusalem remained the capital city of Benjamin and Judah, which existed long as one kingdom. The Ten Tribes went farther north to establish their capital city. Shechem, that we have just left, was chosen in the first place. Here Jeroboam, the first King of the separate kingdom of the Ten Tribes, and his son, reigned for over a score years. But lovely as is the Vale of Shechem, it does not seem well placed as a royal city, for an enemy could easily dominate it from the mountains by which it is overshadowed. The royal city was then removed to a place called Tirzah. It would seem that this second city was not deemed quite satisfactory, for another move was made after some thirty years to Samaria.

The earliest, and most reliable, and probably the most true account of the choice and building of Samaria is contained in the First Book of Kings, chapter xvi.

“ In the thirty and first year of Asa, King of Judah, began Omri to reign over Israel, twelve years ; six years reigned he in Tirzah.

“ And he bought the hill Samaria of Shemer for two talents of silver, and built on the hill, and called the name of the city which he built, after the name of Shemer, owner of the hill, Samaria ” (1 Kings xvi. 23, 24).

During the whole of the rest of the time that the Ten Tribes remained a separate kingdom, Samaria was its capital.

Under the reign of various kings it was beautified and enriched by the great buildings which were erected there, right down to the days of Herod, to whom I must refer you a little later.

When Ahab was King, he built himself a beautiful ivory palace here at Samaria.

The two accounts which follow will show you how this King went wrong :

“ And Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the Lord above all that were before him. And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took to wife Jezebel daughter of Ethbaal, the king of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal, and worshipped him.

“ And he reared up an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria. And Ahab made a grove ; and Ahab did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that went before him.”\*

It would be difficult to find a worse character recorded of any man than that which is given here of this King, who had his palace at Samaria. And the record of his life shows him to have been a weak, wicked, selfish man, a mere weakling in the hands of a strong-minded woman, who was even more wicked than himself.

The second account of the character of this man is given by Josephus :

“ Now, Ahab, the King of Israel, dwelt in Samaria, and held the government for twenty-two years ; and made no alteration in the conduct of the kings that were his predecessors, but only in such things as were of his own invention for the worse, and in his most gross wickedness. He imitated them in their most wicked crimes, and in their infamous behaviour towards

\* 1 Kings xvi. 30-33.



God ; and more especially he imitated the transgression of Jeroboam ; for he worshipped the heifers that he had made : and he contrived other absurd objects of worship beside those heifers ; he also took to wife the daughter of Ethbaal King of the Tyrians and Sidonians, whose name was Jezebel, of whom he learned to worship her own gods. This woman was active and bold, and fell into so great a degree of impurity and wickedness that she built a temple to the god of the Tyrians, which they called Belus, and planted a grove of all sorts of trees ; she also appointed priests and false prophets to this god. The King also himself had many such about him ; and so exceeded in madness and wickedness all (the kings) that went before him.”\*

This ancient writer confirms, in a remarkable way, the account given by the sacred writer of this wicked King, and his notoriously bad Queen.

It is interesting to know that there was at least one strong man in that kingdom, even in those days of darkness and religious persecution. This was the prophet Elijah. This man, a rugged, bold, brave man of faith, dared to face and challenge this King and all the priests and false prophets. When the city was full of palaces and noble buildings, when the streets were full of people crowding the squares and chief places, this rugged son of the inhabitants of Gilead suddenly appeared before the King, and said unto him in language which made but little impression at the time :

“ As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word ” (1 Kings xvii. 1).

\* Josephus, “ Antiquities,” Book XIII., xiii. 5-11.

The priests, and prophets, and proud people of the city would laugh at such a preacher, and over their wine that night would make merry over his madness. But when the days passed, and no rain fell upon the fields, and gardens, and vineyards of beautiful Samaria, they began to be alarmed. As the nights came and went, and left the land unrefreshed by the dews of heaven, the proud people began to think of the preacher's words. Crops failed, cattle died, the earth cracked and gaped for the showers that came not. In the palaces, as well as in the hovels of the poor, it became difficult to keep alive and well. Rivers dried up, streams failed, and the very fountains of the hills ceased to send forth their life-giving waters. Then it was the prophet was sought.

When the famine for want of water was at its height, once more this son of the wilderness, this man of faith, Elijah, suddenly stood face to face with the King. Without fear of what the monarch might do, he charged the King with being the cause of all the suffering by his wickedness and idolatry. He challenged the Court and all the priests to meet him on Mount Carmel to a remarkable fire-test to prove which was the true God. A day and place were fixed, and the vast multitude went their way to Carmel. The officials of the Court were there, and no less than 850 priests, all maintained by the Queen Jezebel. Elijah stood alone, one man against them all.

The test was that a bullock should be slain by each side and be placed on an altar. Each party should pray, and the God that answered by fire should be

acknowledged as the true God. Never before had so remarkable a scene been witnessed as on that day. The account, as fully recorded in the eighteenth chapter of the First Book of Kings, is a wonderful story. Whether you consider the place, the people, or the challenge, Samaria had never witnessed such a wonderful display, neither before nor since. Carmel was, and is, a most beautiful and interesting range of mountains, some twelve miles long. At one end its well-wooded slopes fall rapidly down on the great and fertile Plain of Esdraelon. The traditional place of sacrifice is at that end. The other end of the range dips down, amid a scene of rich gardens and fruitful fields, into the Mediterranean Sea at Haifa. The peak of this end of the mountain-range is crowned with a great monastery occupied by the Carmelite monks. It was somewhere on this delightful mountain-range that the fire-test took place.

The people who assembled for this great trial were numerous and excited. On the tableland the throngs arranged themselves to see what might happen. There they were, the rich and the great, the courtiers and the officials in their robes of office, one mass of mingled, moving human beings. The priests spent the whole day in their acts of devotion, and went through all the horrors of their barbarous religion, and poured their own blood out of the wounds they made upon the altar to win the favour of their gods. But there was no answer to their petitions ; no fire came, no consuming sacrifice was witnessed. Never had a false religion a better chance, never any more shamefully failed.



It must have been a moment of great and intense excitement when the lonely prophet stood forth before that great throng of people from beautiful Samaria. Not a man stood by him. Not a soul to encourage him. Alone, amid a multitude. Alone, and yet not alone, for he felt that One was with him to give him strength and courage. But no human eye flashed upon him a glance of sympathy. No sympathetic voice cheered him in this hour of his great need. Listen to his remarkable prayer :

“ Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that Thou art God in Israel, and that I am Thy servant, and that I have done all this at Thy word. Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that Thou art the Lord God, and that Thou hast turned their heart back again.”

When he had finished his appeal to Heaven the flashing lightning fell upon and consumed the sacrifice which the lonely man of God had prepared. What strange feelings must have seized the hearts of that vast concourse of people when they saw the blazing fire ! Awe and reverence must have seized all their minds. No one can wonder that the multitude fell upon their faces and exclaimed : “ The Lord, He is the God ! the Lord, He is the God ! ”

I must not keep you longer over this most interesting event, much as I would like to do. Nor may I detain you to say much about the effect of it upon the inhabitants of the city of Samaria. How it affected Ahab we hardly know. We are, however, told that Jezebel was influenced by it. Instead of being brought

to repentance, and a change of mind and life, she vowed vengeance against the prophet, and declared that she would kill him. But he fled, and was saved from any power of hers.

It was to this Samaria that the great Syrian soldier, Naaman, came to be cured of his leprosy, as recorded in the fifth chapter of the Second Book of Kings. With a great retinue of horses, chariots, and servants he went to the royal palace, but later got to the house of the prophet Elisha, and was sent by him to dip in the Jordan seven times, as we saw in an earlier chapter.

When I first stood on this spot, where once was the beautiful city teeming with life, I read the sixth and seventh chapters of the Second Book of Kings, which tells of the way in which the city was besieged by the Syrians. I gazed out of the city gates, and saw in imagination the hosts of the enemy who had reduced the proud city to such a state of hunger and destitution that even women became as cannibals. I thought I saw in the moonlight the great hosts of the enemy rise up startled, and take to flight, and leave the city to itself. There were the lepers who came to the city to wake up the porter and give the news that the enemy had fled.

Philip the Evangelist came to Samaria to preach the new Gospel of the Kingdom, and had the joy of making many converts here, and we are told that there was great joy in the city. In the fourth century there was a Bishopric here, and for many centuries afterwards Christianity flourished at Samaria.

To-day, alas ! like many other of the once famous





*Photo. by American Colony Jerusalem.*

THE COLONADE AT SAMARIA, A REMNANT OF ITS ANCIENT GLORY.



*Photo. by American Colony, Jerusalem.*

VIEW OF THE INTERIOR OF JACOB'S WELL.





places of Palestine, it is small, poor, and of but little importance. All its glory is of other days, and of that former grandeur and glory there are many traces still to be seen here. Parts of what must have once been the ancient palaces can be seen built into the poor dwellings in which the inhabitants live. Shafts and columns are here in abundance. Once there was a great and beautiful colonnade, much of which still remains. Some columns are still upright, others are built into walls and houses. Some of these at which you now look may, for aught I can tell you, have formed part of the great and grand palace which Herod had here. If some of those stones could speak, what tales they could tell ! They might tell of the wild scene at Herod's palace when Salome danced before him and his friends in such manner that he promised to give her what she might ask. They could tell of the head of the Baptist delivered to that damsel in the midst of the wild and drunken revelry of the far-off shameful scene.

The prison of the Baptist is shown still, and it was said that his head was buried here. Josephus, the Jewish historian, places the prison of the Baptist beyond the Dead Sea ; and when we reach Damascus we shall be shown the place in that city in which the Baptist's head is said to have been interred. All the facts rather point to Samaria. There is now, as you see, a mosque in part of the building that once was a great and beautiful church !

Ere we leave this once great and flourishing city I only need ask you to think of all it has been, and of

what it is now. Once a city of palaces, colonnades, and homes of the rich. Here all that wealth could procure was brought together. To this royal city all that was most luxurious in the life of the East had its centre. The Court, the men of affairs of State and Government had their homes and mansions here. King after king had his home in this once famous city. Army after army came to its gates. Often destroyed, and as often rebuilt, it has passed through many changes as the centuries have come and gone. Located in a most fertile region, it was highly favoured by Nature ; and yet to-day it is of no consequence, small, poor, and comparatively solitary, amid its bounteous and glorious natural surroundings.

As I am about to take you to Galilee, the scene of the greater part of the ministry of Jesus, I think it well here to give you a rapid description of it before we enter it. When we are in Galilee we shall of necessity be much in contact with the great Teacher. Galilee without Him could have but little attraction for us whose dwellings are so far away from it. True it is, as we shall see, a delightful district ; but few of us would travel so far and at such great cost of time and money except for the fact that He there carried on His remarkable ministry.

All travellers to Palestine who see Judea are impressed by its bare, bleak hills and its stony plains. With few exceptions, the hills are wild, and in some parts almost savage in appearance. Many people have wondered how anything can be produced in many of its stony plains. When first I passed from Judea into



Galilee, I was delighted with the sweet and pleasant aspect which this latter now wears as contrasted with the former. In the Saviour's days the contrast would not be quite so great as it is now. Then many of the Judean hills were terraced almost to their summits ; now, where the traveller gazes upon bleak, bare limestone rocks, he would then behold beautiful gardens, the product of labour under conditions more favourable to industry than those of the present. Still, in our Lord's time Galilee was by far the richer in natural scenery, and possessed the more fruitful soil. It must have been a land flowing with milk and honey, a very paradise of God. Speaking of Galilee, Dr. Merrill says :

“ Rich forests, luxuriant vineyards, and beautiful gardens were the product of its rich soil. With a climate almost like perpetual spring, its mountains and hills were covered with forests, while its uplands, gentle slopes, and broader valleys were rich in pastures, meadows, cultivated fields, vineyards, olive-groves, and fruit-trees of every kind. Here flourished the vine, the olive, and the fig ; the oak, the hardy walnut ; the terebinth and the hot-blooded palm ; the cedar, cypress, and balsam ; the fir-tree, the pine, and the sycamore ; the bay-tree, the myrtle, the almond, the pomegranate, the citron, and the beautiful oleander. These, with still many other forest, fruit, and flowering shrubs and aromatic plants, together with grains and fruits, to which should be added an infinite profusion of flowers, made up that wonderful variety of natural productions which adorned and enriched the region where Jesus lived most of His early life.”

Galilee was thickly populated in the Saviour's time. Not only had it a fruitful soil and natural aspects which made it one of the most fruitful and attractive of places, but it had a vast population occupying its cities and villages. To-day it has but few cities, a scanty population, and is feeble and poor as compared with its former wealth, strength, and numbers. Around its lake there once stood some nine or ten important cities, all centres of active life ; now but few remain, as remnants of a glory which has departed. Capernaum, once famous, rich, populous, proud, is in the dust, with nothing left to mark its former site save broken marbles. And the lake itself, formerly the scene of busy life, is quiet, solitary, forsaken. It was once alive with fleets of sailing-boats of the Imperial residents of Tiberias and Julias, and the humbler, but none the less useful, boats of the fishermen. These are all gone, and you will look in vain for any evidence that they were ever there. As I was pulled over the surface of that lake by six men of Tiberias, wearing their picturesque costumes, I tried to think of the fleets of ships which once spread their sails and splashed their busy oars into its waters. I looked at its northern and western shore, and thought of the rich and populous towns that once were there, and I could not help contrasting its present solitude with its former busy life.

But not only did cities stand around about the lake, but they were numerous throughout the whole province of Galilee. When Galilee was divided chiefly among the four tribes of Asher, Naphtali, Zebulon, and Issachar, after the conquest by Joshua, they had some

sixty-nine cities mentioned by name. In Josephus's time these cities had grown to two hundred and four. When its whole area is taken to be about 2,000 square miles, it would at first sight seem almost incredible that there could have been so many cities, and that the province could have supported a population of some 3,000,000. And yet it seems to have been so. It was to this centre of teeming life and activity that Christ went to declare His doctrine of the Kingdom of God, complete His little band of companions, perform some of His great works, and utter some of His most profound sayings.

It is to this province we come. Before closing this chapter we may have a few words about the character of the population of Galilee. Its people were considerably mixed as to race, and were chiefly, though not entirely, agricultural. They were more simple in their manners, and not as refined in their speech, as were the people of the South. But they were industrious, brave, religious. True, they were somewhat removed from the blandishments of the Court, and lived at the farthest point from the influence of the Temple, the intrigues of the leaders of the nation, and the softer and more voluptuous ways of the South. But to brand them as inferior on this account, and to say that they were more heathenish, ignorant, and wicked, would be as unwise as it would be untrue.

When the South rejected Christ, the North opened its arms to receive Him. Its synagogues in every city and village were open to Him, and the universal know-



ledge of the Scriptures prepared the way for Him to teach His new doctrines.

And yet it seems strange to us that Jesus should select this province as the chief scene of His ministry. Jerusalem would appear to be the right place. It was the capital, the City of David, the centre of the Jewish religious system, the home of learning, the place of the Chief Priesthood of the Jewish world. Galilee was a province far removed, and out of it no prophet had come, nor should come, according to the teaching of the times. Some would have said that a cultured audience was not possible there, and to seek to do His work in Galilee was to court defeat. And yet it was here that Christ carried on most of His ministry.

Three of our Gospels are taken up mostly with accounts of what He said and did in Galilee. Here He had His home from infancy to manhood, growing in wisdom as He increased in stature, and here it was that most, if not all, His disciples were at home. And here it is that we must travel for some time to come, visiting the places made famous by His life, His teaching, and His wonderful works.

## CHAPTER XIX

### SAMARIA TO NAZARETH

WE must now bid good-bye to this remarkable and deeply interesting town and district of Samaria. Every foot of our journey to Nazareth lies over ground that is historic. On our way we pass quite a number of large and prosperous villages surrounded by olive-groves, orchards, and gardens. Crossing the valley, along which flows a small stream, and ascending the opposite hill, we get another charming view. An extensive plain lies before us studded with villages. The mountains and plains of Galilee are now within the range of vision. Yonder in the distance you get a view of Gilboa, where Saul so sadly perished together with his son Jonathan. There rises out of the plain Mount Tabor, like a huge sugar-loaf in shape. It was on the summit of this mountain that one tradition says the transfiguration of Jesus took place, though another puts it somewhere farther north, on one of the spurs of Mount Hermon. You have a good view of Carmel, where Elijah had his great victory of faith over the false priests and prophets.

Before we leave the summit of this hill, soon to pass along what must have been one of the great highways

of commerce, and over which, doubtless, Jesus travelled, we now turn and have a long, last fine view of Samaria and its charming surroundings, the scene of so many events and incidents recorded in Holy Scripture.

We do not travel very far before we reach the place called *Tell Dothan*. Once a considerable town stood here. It was here that the brethren of Joseph were tending their father's flock, when Joseph, their younger brother, came to seek them at the bidding of their father. Seeking for them in the fruitful Vale of Shechem, he was informed that they had gone to Dothan. To Dothan he went after them. As they saw him approach, it would seem that their jealousy of him, caused by the favours which his father had shown him, found its expression in their treatment of him. Stripping him of his coat of many colours, they cast him into a pit, or well, or some place of the kind.

As they were near to one of the great highways, it was not surprising that they should see a company of Ishmeelites approaching with their camels heavily laden with spices and other merchandise, which they carried down to Egypt.\* Even to this day such companies may be seen on that same track, only we should now call them Bedouin, or Arabs, or Bedouin Arabs. In my original diary I thus describe the place at which we have now arrived :

“ We have now reached one of the loveliest valleys I have seen in this land. Yonder is the Hill of Dothan. There is the vast plain, beautiful with every shade of green. Hills on both sides. A bright sun upon it

\* Gen. xxxvii. 28.



makes it beautiful to behold. I can imagine Joseph inquiring for his brothers. . . .

“I have passed the spot where the well is said to have been into which Joseph was put by his brethren. Here are some stones, and here is running water, but the well is filled up. A small corn-mill stands just near the well.”

It was here at Dothan that the charioteers and horsemen of Assyria sought Elisha when he had given warning to the King of Israel which had saved Israel from falling into the hands of the Assyrians, as recorded in the Second Book of Kings, sixth chapter. Dothan is an ancient place. It seems to have been known at least fifteen or sixteen hundred years before Christ.

We must pass several villages, and travel over a somewhat rough road in order to get on to the edge of the great Plain of Esdraelon, to a town called Jenin. This place is of some importance, having several thousand inhabitants. It is supposed to be the ancient En-gannim of Scripture. There are here many beautiful and fruitful gardens, and an abundance of water which is good. When on the spot for my first visit, I wrote :

“In camp at Jenin, tribe of Issachar. After a restless night, I rose at 5.15, unrefreshed. Howling of the jackals, barking of the dogs, braying of the donkeys, and chattering of the Arabs, kept me awake nearly all night. A bright and beautiful morning greets us as we prepare for a long ride to Nazareth. What a blessing to-morrow is Sunday! What a boon a day of rest is to a tired man. . . .”

From Jenin we soon emerge on to the great and fruitful plains of Esdraelon. This great tract of level land stretches across the centre of the Holy Land. The average width of these plains is from ten to twelve miles. Lying between the mountains of Galilee on the north and the mountains of Samaria on the south, the soil is very rich and capable of the greatest fertility. From ancient times, it has been a great corn-growing district, and, according to the accounts in the Bible, these plains have often been the scene of great robbery. The Canaanites, and the Midianites, and the Amalekites have all found here the fruits which others have laboured to produce, and made off with them. Many battles have been waged in these plains. I think it was Napoleon the Great who said that they were intended by Providence to be the battle-ground of soldiers.

We are in the very midst of places of surpassing interest while travelling over these extensive plains. The following is from my old diary :

“For a long time we have been riding over the extensive plain of Esdraelon, famous for its fertility and most delightful to see. We have ridden through cornfields in abundance. Yonder comes a caravan of camels laden with grain. These are the wandering Bedouin with their tents as of old. We are now in front of Jezreel, an important scriptural place. It is in a delightful situation. Yonder is Hermon. There Naboth’s vineyard. Down there is Gideon’s fountain, where his men lapped the water. A little distance away (but quite in view) is Shunem, whilst between all these mountains stretches the great plain. What a privilege to see it all !”

Gideon's fountain is memorable because of the remarkable selection of 300 soldiers that Gideon chose there. He armed those 300 men in a fashion that would make our commanders smile. Instead of swords, he put into one hand of each man a trumpet, and into the other hand of each man he placed a pitcher with a lighted lamp within it. At a given signal, these men were to blow with the trumpets, break the pitchers, and shout at the top of their voices: "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." We read that in the confusion which followed, panic seized the army of the Midianites, and they fled for their lives (see Judges vii.).

It was somewhere near here that Saul was encamped with his army on the night before his last battle with the Philistines. In the twenty-eighth chapter of the First Book of Samuel we have an account of Saul's sad condition. As the first King of Israel, he began his reign well, and promised to be of service to his nation. But he became feeble, lost his counsellors, lost heart, lost his kingdom, and his life. On that fatal night, wearing a disguise, he left the camp, accompanied only by two of his men, and went to consult a witch. It was a sad sight to see a King leaving his army under cover of darkness to consult a fortune-teller! We know the result. Next day, sore pressed by the enemy, he fell on Mount Gilboa.

Before we take the last stage of our journey to Nazareth, we must visit two other places. The first of these is Shunem—the place where lived that great and good woman who was content to dwell among her own people. The little town, or large village, as you



will see, has a more prosperous appearance than some of the places we have seen. There are orange groves, lemon gardens, citron-trees, and plenty of water. It was here that the hosts of the Philistines were encamped on that night when King Saul, wearing his disguise, went over the shoulder of the hill. The place is most remembered because of the brave and unselfish woman whose residence was there, of whose good deeds we read in the Second Book of Kings, chapter four.

“And it fell on a day, that Elisha passed to Shunem, where was a great woman ; and she constrained him to eat bread. . . .

“And she said unto her husband, Behold now, I perceive that this is an holy man of God, which passeth by us continually.

“Let us make a little chamber, I pray thee, on the wall ; and let us set for him there a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick : and it shall be, when he cometh to us, that he shall turn in thither.

“And it fell on a day, that he came thither, and he turned into the chamber, and lay there.

“And he said to Gehazi his servant, Call this Shunammite. And when he had called her, she stood before him.

“And he said unto him, Say now unto her, Behold, thou hast been careful for us with all this care ; what is to be done for thee ? wouldest thou be spoken for to the King, or to the captain of the host ? And she answered, I dwell among mine own people.”

From Shunem I must ask you to turn aside for a while, that we may ride over to Nain.

In my diary I find the words which follow describing

Nain, and they bring to my mind many pleasant recollections of the little place.

“ In an hour, seven of us will ride one hour out, and one hour in, to visit Nain, and see the spot where our Saviour raised the widow’s son. . . .

“ Have just reached Nain. It is a poor little village under the shadow of great hills. A church stands over the spot where the Saviour is supposed to have raised the widow’s son to life. A marble slab marks the spot where the Lord said,

“ ‘ Young man, I say unto thee, arise ’ ” (Luke vii. 14).

This description of the place, written twenty years ago, barely does justice to the district in which Nain is situated. The village itself is, as I say in the diary, small and poor. At some time it must have been much larger than it is now. Though the ages which have passed have brought much rubbish to it, there are some traces of its former days, when it must have been far more important than it is in these days. There are some traces of rock-hewn tombs here—such as the inhabitants of a poor little place, like the present village, would hardly be likely to make.

But what the place lacks in size is amply compensated for by the glory and the beauty of the district. The situation is good, and commands a fine outlook. You get a fine and most impressive view of the Galilean hills. All around are rich plains, with a soil that is most generous, and yields bountifully for even the smallest labour put into it.

I suppose that this little place has a name known to many millions of people living in all parts of the world.

One of the notable things about almost every place in Palestine—even where those places are in ruins now—is that their names, and the events associated with them, are impressed upon the minds of all sorts and conditions of people, in every land to which the Bible has gone. Though this village is mentioned but once in the Bible, the event which took place at it was most pathetic and touching. Let us read the account while we are on the spot. Every incident named in the Bible seems far more real and true when we can read them on the very ground where the events took place.

“And it came to pass the day after, that He went into a city called Nain; and many of His disciples went with Him, and much people.

“Now when He came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her.

“And when the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not.

“And He came and touched the bier: and they that bare him stood still. And He said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise.

“And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And He delivered him to his mother” (Luke vii.).

You cannot wonder that Nain is remembered, and its very name treasured in the memory of vast numbers of people who read the narrative, who have no hope of ever seeing the place.

There is but little doubt, and never has been much, that here we are at the place where this remarkable



miracle took place. The modern name is *Nein*. It was well known to the crusaders and to some of the Church Fathers. St. Jerome, who lived at Bethlehem many years, mentions *Nein*. Doubtless he would often visit the place in his journeys from south to north.

That one event has given to this village a fame that will endure so long as the New Testament which enshrines the narrative has an existence.

And now we must take our last short journey to Nazareth. We emerge from the plain, and mount the hill over which we pass to the city itself, and find ourselves in Nazareth of Galilee. Here we must stay a while.

## CHAPTER XX

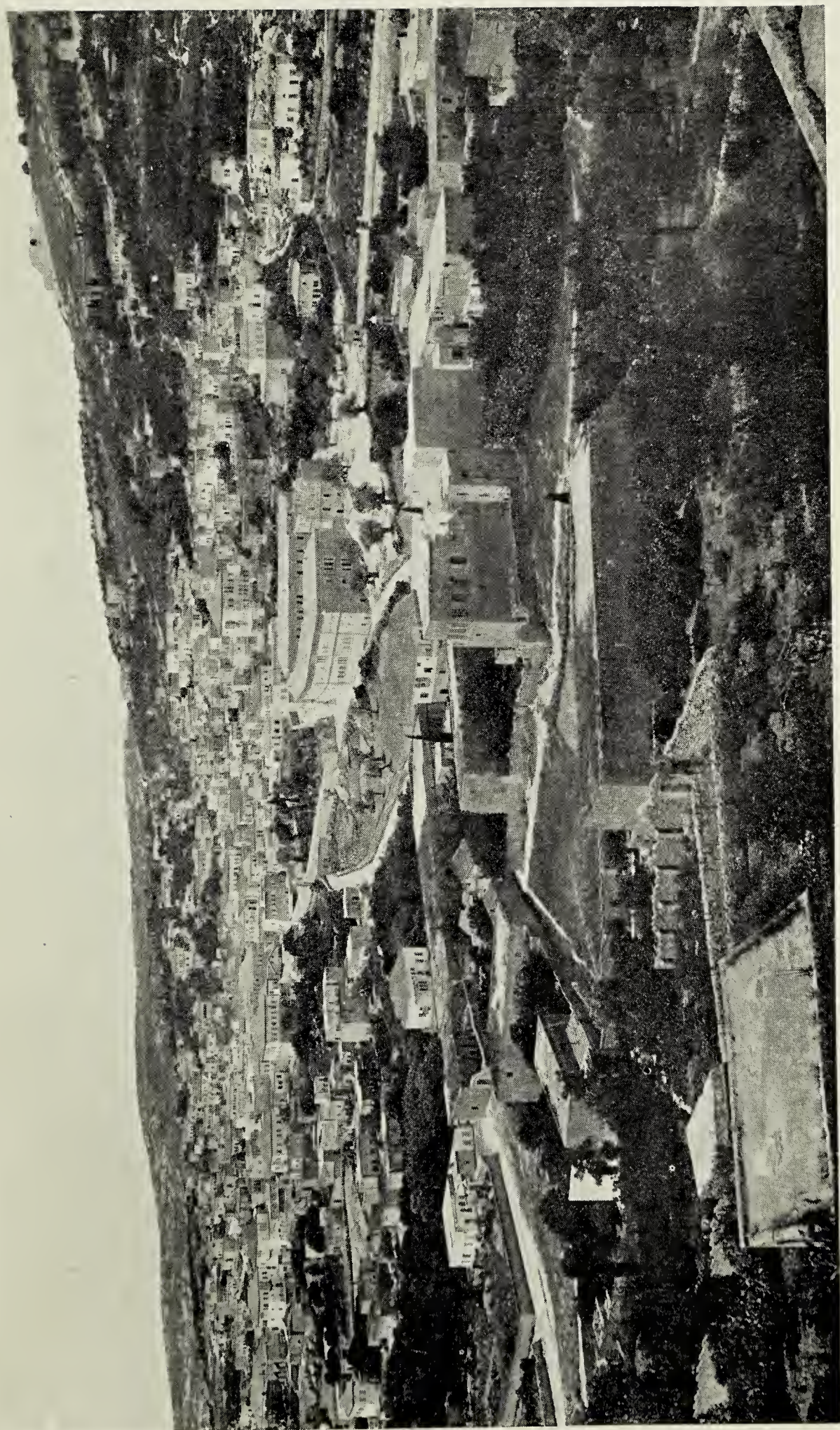
### NAZARETH

GALILEE of the time of Christ was vastly different from the Galilee of to-day. Now its inhabitants, for the most part poor, live in villages and a few small towns in which they get such living as they are able. The province is by far the most attractive and beautiful of the whole of Palestine, and has a soil rich, loamy, and fertile. Yet the traveller is always struck with the poor appearance of the people. When I saw the Turkish tax-gatherers collecting their dues in some of the places I felt that the people seemed almost as unable as they were unwilling to pay them. And I often wondered if the oppressive rule under which the people have so long lived has anything to do with their wretched condition.

When Jesus lived on earth, Galilee was thickly populated and studded all over with villages, towns, and cities. Beecher, speaking of it, says :

“ The population was a mixed one, made up of many different nationalities. A debased remnant of the ten tribes, after their captivity, had wandered back, with Jewish blood and heathen manners. The Roman armies and Roman rulers had brought into the province





*Photo. by American Colony, Jerusalem.*

A GENERAL VIEW OF THE CITY OF NAZARETH.





a great many foreigners. A large Gentile population had divided with native Jews the towns and villages. Greeks swarmed in the larger commercial towns; Galilee was, far more than Judea, cosmopolitan. Commerce and manufactures had thriven by the side of agriculture. The influences which had changed the people had provincialized their language. A Galilean was known by his speech, which seems to have been regarded as unrefined and vulgar. . . .”

Most writers tell us that Galilee was very thickly populated in the early years of the first Christian century. One ancient writer says there were in Galilee no less than two hundred and forty cities and villages. Some of these were large, and some of them were walled cities. As you look at the districts, and notice the fertile loamy soil, and breathe the bracing air, you will feel it easy to believe that once an enormous population must have filled these delightful districts.

Our chief interest centres in Nazareth. There are three places in Palestine attractive above all others—Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Nazareth. Every pilgrim to the Holy Land who travels north goes to Nazareth. There our Lord lived for nearly thirty years of His earthly life, and has made its very name precious and dear to millions of Christian souls. Year by year, as the facilities for travelling improve, the number of pilgrims to Nazareth increases, and we cannot wonder at it. There is in the minds of most a desire to see the streets, and lanes, and hills, and valleys where the Saviour lived and wandered through thirty years of His sojourn among men. From the earliest times of

our era this desire has so possessed men that they were willing to brave the dangers of sea and land, and the perils of robbers many and fierce, in order that their eyes might look upon the landscape which Jesus gazed upon, and put their feet where they supposed His had trod. Nor will this longing soon die out. From the fathers to the sons it will pass on, and we may safely assume that it will possess the generations unborn. Hence all that relates to Nazareth forms an interesting study.

Though wellnigh two thousand years have passed since the Saviour's Ascension, it is possible for us to get a fairly accurate picture of the daily life of Nazareth when Jesus walked its streets and toiled in one of its workshops. Those Eastern cities remain almost unchanged in their manners and customs as the centuries roll by. So deeply rooted is the dread of change, and the desire to keep things as they are, that, if you see an old street in Damascus or Nazareth to-day, you will see those streets much as Abraham and Jesus saw them. When I first walked the narrow streets and steep lanes of Nazareth, and looked at the people on its streets and in its houses, I tried to think that they might be much the same when He saw them. And when, at the well—always a centre of interest at Nazareth—I saw quite a number of women—some at work, others filling their vessels with water—I almost imagined I could see her face among them who was His mother, and who must often have come to this very well.

Nazareth lies in a nest of hills in the highest part of the land. When I first approached it in the spring of



the year the district was at its best. The fields and hills blazed with the glory of its many and varied wild-flowers.

To reach the town itself you first ascend and then descend a hill, for it lies as in a basin, the hills rising all round it. From the hill behind the town there is a charming view over almost the whole of the land. On a bright and beautiful Sunday I sat on that hill and wrote the following words in my notebook :

“Sitting on the top of the hill in the clear fresh morning air, I am having one of the finest views Palestine affords. At my feet lies the town with its square, clean buildings and church towers, with all their bells now calling worshippers to church. Away yonder stretches Esdraelon, while farther east rise the mountains of Gilead beyond Jordan. To the north is Hermon, to the south the mountains which surround Jerusalem. Behind me, on the west, Mount Carmel, and the Mediterranean with its blue waters. I never before gazed upon such a panorama of mountains and plains which abound in so many sacred memories. This picture will live in my memory.”

Dr. Fairbairn thus describes this view :

“The hill which rises behind the city looks upon a scene of rarest loveliness—mountains that uplift their snowy heads to a heaven that stoops to kiss them; valleys, fruitful—vine-clad, swelling into soft ridges, melting into a plain that slopes on lines of rich beauty to the distant sea. And the scene must have been familiar to His eye; all its objects terms in which He and heaven could speak to each other; its moods, moments when Father and Son could stand, as it were, face to face.”

There is a marked difference between the population of Nazareth and the population of many other places in the land. Whether it is the free air of the mountains, its bracing character, its elevating tendency or not, I cannot say ; but the fact remains that the people in the streets of Nazareth to-day seem to be of a superior type. And this is seen both in the men and the women and the happy children. The men appear of a better type, whilst the women are among the most good-looking of the country. The dress, too, is different here at Nazareth. It is a picturesque sight to look at a crowd of the people in the streets. The many colours blend together, and are rather pretty in appearance. It was the style of the dress, rather than the colour, which most struck me, and especially that of the women. Many of them wear peculiar head-dresses, white veils to cover the face, and very baggy trousers reaching to the ankles. Whilst many of them cover their faces, numbers of them go with their feet uncovered. One wonders, as he sees the picturesque-looking people, if the scene at all resembles what it was like in the days of Jesus. In a land where it is said nothing changes age after age through thousands of years, we may perhaps be permitted to think that it remains much the same.

Nazareth had a bad reputation. "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" asked Nathanael, who was a native of Cana, a place hard by, and therefore likely to know something of its character. How it came to have its unenviable notoriety, and to what extent it deserved it, it is hard to say. But it was

neither loved by the Jew nor admired by the Gentile. Lying far from Jerusalem, the city of the scholar, the priest, and the Temple, it may have been less influenced by these than cities much nearer the Hill of Zion, and on that account may have come to be regarded with suspicion and distrust. It suffered a little, perhaps much, from the lack of scholarly men and the influence of the great schools which elevated some of the other places of that Holy Land. To the shadiness of the character which it had when our Saviour went to live there, there was added the sin and folly of rejecting Him, the noblest of all its citizens. And yet, with all its bad reputation, this was the spot which Providence chose for the earthly home of the Son of God.

Nazareth has no mention in the Old Testament, nor does it find a record in the pages of the Jewish historian, Josephus. It is first named in Matthew, but as it must have had an existence for a long time before the birth of Jesus, there is a possibility that it may once have passed under some other name which we have not yet discovered. Though it has no mention in the Old Testament, it lies among and within sight of places which abound in sacred associations. Beecher said :

“Jesus lived in the very sight of places made memorable by the deeds of His country’s greatest men. If He sat on still Sabbath days upon the hill-top, child-like, alternately watching and musing, He must at times have seen the shadowy forms and heard the awful tones of those extraordinary men, the



Hebrew prophets. There was before Him Gilboa, on which Samuel's shadow came to Saul and overthrew him. Across these plains and over these solitary mountains Elijah, that grandest and most dramatic of the old prophets, had often come, and disappeared as soon, bearing the Lord's messages, as the summer storm bears the lightning. He could see the very spots where Elisha, prophet of the gentle heart, had wrought kind miracles, and the sword of David had flashed over these plains."

Here it was that Jesus lived from infancy to manhood, through those thirty years of historic silence—broken only once—which He passed in preparation for that wonderful ministry and remarkable teaching which have revolutionized the world. Here, at this place, He grew up whose moral principles form the groundwork of the largest and most powerful nations of the earth. Here, amid these romantic mountains and fertile valleys, His boyhood, youth, and early manhood passed. Here it was that He gained that love of the fields and sky which fill so large a place in His teaching. The flowers of the field, the birds of the air, ploughing the field, casting the seed, the growing tares, the harvest-field, the happy reapers, the well-filled barns, the hen and chickens—of all these He gained His knowledge among the mountains of Galilee. Dr. Lyman Abbott says :

" Here He often wandered, picking the wild-flowers, gratifying that love of Nature which so characterized His after-life and teachings. Into the mountain solitudes with which this rural region abounds He loved

to retreat from the distasteful crowd and bustle of great cities. Here He commenced His ministry. Here He wrought most of His miracles. First in the synagogue, and then in the valleys and on the hillsides of Galilee, He preached most of the discourses which have been preserved and handed down to us. From the simple fishermen, who lived and laboured on the shore of Lake Tiberias, He selected most of His companions and Apostles. Among these mountains He organized His little Church, and sent His followers forth to preach 'the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.' And at the setting of the sun, in the quiet wooded glades of Galilee rather than in the synagogue and the Temple, He sought that solitude for which His heart yearned, that He might commune with His Father and His God."

Nazareth owes all its fame to the fact that it was the home of Jesus. It shines entirely in a borrowed light. Like our famous Stratford-on-Avon, beautiful for situation, it would never have been heard of except for the great one who lived there.

Though the great highway for the caravans and pilgrims and merchants that passed from Asia to Africa, to carry on their trade, was not very far away, Nazareth itself lay a little off the beaten track. It is eighteen miles from the Sea of Galilee, and between five and six from Tabor, and about the same distance from Cana of Galilee. Surrounded as it is by hills, it is somewhat sheltered, and this adds to the geniality of its climate. Its population is somewhere about ten thousand souls. It abounds with fruitful and beautiful gardens.

In religion its population is very mixed. The Greek

and Latin Churches here claim the greater number of its people. More than half the inhabitants are said to belong to the Orthodox Greek Church. Besides these, there are many Greek Catholics and Latins, some Protestants, and others.

In a previous chapter I have told you that its inhabitants are of a class superior to many of those met with elsewhere. The Christians are noted for their kindness and generosity—more so than I have noticed in any other place in Palestine. The women, especially the young women, rival those of Bethlehem for beauty of feature, and certainly surpass them in intelligence, industry, and womanly characteristics. Seen from a distance, the town, like Jerusalem, makes a charming and attractive picture. Its beauty impressed me when I first saw it, just as it impresses me now whenever I see it.

I must now take you to see some of the sights of this hill city. It abounds in so-called sacred places—some of them improbable, some of them quite probable. The religious associations of the town are many and varied. I will not take you to all of them, for that would weary you, making you think less of the town, and I do not wish you to leave the place with a bad impression. Its narrow, not over-clean, streets will hardly help you to admire the town, but I will only take you to such of these as I am obliged to do. I rather want you to see the best it has, and its best is good.

Let us go to the Church of the Annunciation. This beautiful building is said to stand over the place where Mary had her dwelling, when the Angel Gabriel an-



nounced to her that she, favoured above all women, should be the mother of Jesus. Under the church there are caves and rooms which are pointed out as Mary's kitchen, Joseph's workshop, and the Chapel of the Angel. These are, of course, mere inventions of the priests, and are shown to the many pilgrims, who part with their money, and return home thankful that they have seen such a soul-saving sight. The only thing about this church and its story that we may be sure about is that the church itself occupies part of a site formerly occupied by a church erected by the Franks about the year 1185. There is a beautiful altar in the church, and some interesting pictures.

From this place I must take you to a little Greek church, which is said to be on the site of the synagogue in which Jesus read the Scripture and delivered a remarkable address which led the inhabitants to expel Him from their city, the home of His childhood. The beautiful account of it is found in the fourth chapter of Luke :

“And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up : and, as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read.

“And there was delivered unto Him the book of the Prophet Esaias. And when He opened the book, He found the place where it was written,

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the Gospel to the poor ; He hath sent Me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,

“To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.”

The occasion was a remarkable one. So far as we know, it was the first time that Jesus had addressed an audience in His own town since His Anointing and Baptism and Temptation. News of the great things He had done in the South, and especially of the sensation He had caused at Jerusalem by turning out the traders from the Temple, had reached as far as Nazareth. Though there was no telephone or telegraph in those days, news soon spread. To-day, with a rapidity that astonishes us, news spreads in that land from camp to camp among the Bedouin tribes of the desert. Injure one company, or threaten to injure them, and, as if by electric telegraph, the vast number of tribes seem to know, in places far distant from each other. So probably in the days of Jesus.

News had reached the hills that the Carpenter had come to the home of His mother. On the eve of that Sabbath He would be discussed in every home in Nazareth. And when the Sabbath sun rose over the mountains of Gilead, and lit up the hills and vales at and about the town, the people were early astir. The synagogue was filled. Every inch of space set apart for men was filled. The women, too, would have their places in that assembly. There was His mother, and sisters, and friends. Among the men were many who had known Him all His life, and not a few for whom He had done carpenter's work. The elders of the synagogue were there in their places, looking a little more serious than usual. The service began. The Psalms were chanted, prayers read, and for a while all went much as it was accustomed to do.

At the time for reading the Scripture, Jesus stepped forth, and exercised the privilege which was extended to notable visitors of reading the lesson. I can see Him as He approached the reader's stand and unrolled the book. Every eye in the place was fixed upon Him. There was a solemn hush and quiet that was most intense. How did He look ? How does the minister of religion look to-day when for the first time he enters the pulpit ? How does the barrister look who stands up in court with his brief before him for his first case ? How does the statesman look who rises in his place to make his first important speech on some Bill which he has introduced into the House of Commons ? These look pale, anxious, excited, and somewhat nervous. I shall never forget the first time I went to the sacred desk to conduct the first service after I was called to be a minister of religion. Had my father or my mother been in the gallery at the other end of the building I could not have seen them. And when, later in life, it was my lot to be elected a Member of Parliament, and rise in my place to address the House for my maiden speech, my knees knocked together, and literally I trembled. I could not see my own face, but I have no doubt it revealed the great excitement and nervous tension under which I was speaking.

Though Jesus was more than a mere man, He was a man. As such, He would pass through the experiences which most nervously high-strung men do under like circumstances ; so I describe Him to you as looking pale, anxious, and somewhat excited, though bringing to bear great self-command.



Note the passage He read. This was one of those glowing portions of Scripture which were supposed to describe the characteristics of the coming great One. It was a foreword about the Messiah, whom the Hebrew prophets and their sacred writers and great scholars had taught them to expect. When He had finished the passage He closed the book, handed it back to the attendant, and, following the custom, sat down to speak to them.

According to the account in Luke iv. 21, the Revised Version, His first words were :

“To-day hath this Scripture been fulfilled in your ears.”

Never before in that place had there been such a look of astonishment as now. Never had anyone stood at that desk, not even the most scholarly of their elders and visitors, and made such a statement as He then made. He claimed to be the promised One to whom the words referred. It meant nothing less than that He was their Messiah. You cannot be surprised at their amazement as they heard His words. He, the carpenter, who had lived among them, whose family they all knew—He the Messiah! Had they heard correctly? Was He mad? Had much reading and study turned His head? Was not this blasphemy?

I say you cannot wonder, if you put yourselves in their place, that they were angry. You cannot be surprised that they seized Him, expelled Him from their city, and sought to do Him bodily harm. Such a scene had never before been witnessed in that place, and since then there has never been another like it.

I have kept you long at this little church, now owned by the Greek Catholics, because we may be on the very spot where the scene took place.

You will ask me if the hill over which they attempted to throw Him can be identified. From the Middle Ages one hill has been pointed out as the very place. It is now called the Mount of Precipitation. You see it out yonder, two miles from the city, but perhaps no one will ever know the precise spot.

We must now have a peep at the Virgin's Fountain—that is, the well of Nazareth. This is the well to which the women of the place come for water for domestic purposes. There is usually a goodly company of women here, both old and young. Some may be seen busy washing, others waiting their turn to fill their vessels, and all engaged in lively talk. There are but few who doubt the genuineness of this well. It is quite reasonable to suppose that Mary, the mother of Jesus, often came here, as do the women of to-day as you see them. She may even have come carrying with her the young child Jesus, as some of the mothers do now. And there is every probability that Jesus Himself, both as youth and man, would stop here to quench His thirst on His way to or from His Nazarene home. There are numerous other places at Nazareth about which some sacred story is told, but I must leave you to seek them out for yourselves at other times. I have thought it sufficient to take you to three of the least disputed sites, the sites about which there is very great probability as to genuineness.

But before we say good-bye to Nazareth I must not

omit to call your attention to the fact that Nazareth is not without its Protestant Christian agencies. The largest and most important of these is the girls' school and orphanage. The buildings of this noble charity stand on the hillside in a most delightful garden. If you enter you will be welcome, and allowed to look over the buildings, and see the girls, who will probably sing for you. The first time I went to the place it was a broiling hot day, so hot that I and my companions were really uncomfortable. I remember well the rest we had in the deliciously cool room, and the excellent cup of tea which the ladies in charge made for us, and which was handed to us by the girls of the Home.

Beside this Home there are other agencies for the good of the people. There are the Roman Catholic Sisters of Nazareth, who also have schools for girls. A large amount of useful work is done by the various religious societies, both Catholic and Protestant. These agencies extend their blessed work to the villages near to Nazareth.

You will not fail to notice that a good deal of industry is carried on here. The mason, the carpenter, the blacksmith, can all be seen at their work. Whilst the shops are not over-attractive to those of us who know Oxford Street and Regent Street of London, there are plenty of these stores abutting upon the narrow and not over-clean streets of the town. The girls and women of Nazareth are noted for their beautiful needlework, which they offer for sale to visitors.



## CHAPTER XXI

### CANA OF GALILEE

WE leave Nazareth by a rather steep and somewhat rough road. But from its summit we get a fine and entrancing view of the town. It looks really beautiful as seen from this hill.

About five miles from Nazareth, on the direct route to Tiberias, stands a little village known by the name of *Kefr Kenna*; this is said to be the ancient Cana of Galilee. I quote again from my diary :

“ Starting early from Nazareth, where we had spent a quiet and most delightful Sunday, we were soon at the village of Kenna. As we journeyed the whole range of Carmel was in view, with its trees and ridges running down at one end to Haifa, and seeming at the distance to dip into the Mediterranean Sea, which glittered in the clear light of the fresh morning, like a great sea of molten silver, calm and still. As we approached the village we were met by a number of wild and wolfish-looking dogs, whose teeth seemed ready to tear and devour us, as intruders who had no right to be there. At the entry to the village is a spring from which the water to fill the pots at the ancient wedding-feast may have been carried. A number of women were busy here, as we had seen at Nazareth, engaged upon the occupation of washing. Two small

churches, one Greek and the other Latin, stand over the traditional site of the house in which Christ made water into wine, and, of course, here you can see one of the water-pots used at the wedding-feast ! Though the place is not large, it looks rather pretty as seen from the distance."

The site of Cana, as of most of the sacred places of Palestine, is uncertain, and the traveller, as I found, often needs to be on his guard against the statements now made to him. Some fix the site of Cana at a greater distance from Nazareth than this little town, Kana-el-Galil, a deserted and wretched place, about nine miles north of Nazareth. Both places are supported by the weight of great names. Whatever may be the arguments in favour of the more distant place, harmonizing more with the ancient name, the present Kefr Kenna seems to me to fit in best with the references to it in the Gospels.

The Cana of Galilee of our Lord's time may have been a place of some little note, and was perhaps a thriving country village or small town, inhabited by a few prosperous persons. But whatever importance it has had in history it owes entirely to Jesus Christ. Except for its connection with Him, no Bible reader would meet with its name at all. It is not mentioned in the Old Testament, nor in the New, except as it is named for the circumstances which gather round Him. Like Nazareth, a few miles distant, it shines in a borrowed Light. It was the scene of the first recorded display of the miraculous power of Christ.

After an absence of some time from Galilee, Jesus

is back again. Once more He breathes the air of the hills, and must have rejoiced to see the beauty and glory of the district again. What a contrast this, to the wild, waste wilderness, with its bleak rocks, howling beasts, its days of hunger, its nights of terrible pain and anguish, and its tempting Satan!

Where Jesus went during this visit to Galilee I cannot tell you; except in one instance we can only imagine. It is reasonable to suppose that He would visit the old homestead, His mother, and His brethren. We should like to know what kind of communication He had with them. It must be noted that this visit to the province was some months before His discourse in the synagogue at Nazareth. In the months of His absence, not much change could have come to His mother, and sisters, and brothers in the quiet kind of life which they lived in a prosaic place like Nazareth. But what a change has come to Him! When He left them He was the village carpenter: now He is the Lord's Anointed. When He went away He was one of them—an obedient member of the family; now He is a Rabbi, and has already called five disciples to His side, and will soon return to Jerusalem. Henceforth He is not the son of Mary, but the Son of God, the Son of Man, the great Teacher, the Mighty Healer, and the Founder of the Kingdom of God on earth. Did they notice any change in Him? Did He tell them what He had passed through? Did He declare to them His intentions as to the future? Did He announce to them that He, their son and brother, born of Mary, reared among them, working with them



and for them, at the carpenter's bench—that He was the great Messiah for whose coming the Jewish world both waited and prayed? These are questions we can never answer. But from the determined hostility of His family to Him during nearly all His ministry I am inclined to think that He did impart to them some such information, and that it was met with scorn and contempt, and roused a deep prejudice against Him. All that we certainly know is that He went to a wedding at Cana of Galilee.

We may, however, arrive at a little better conclusion respecting the length of His stay. The wedding at Cana is believed to have been on a Wednesday, toward the end of February, and the Passover at Jerusalem to which Jesus went as described in the same chapter was at the end of April. Thus a period of two months elapsed between the wedding and the Feast. One of the perplexing things in connection with every study of our Lord's life is the scantiness of the records occupied by the accounts we have. A few verses contain all we know of the first thirty years. And during His ministry we meet with large gaps, and considerable periods during which we cannot see Him. Here is one of those gaps. There is every probability, however, that the time now was spent in earnest preparation for the great and difficult work He entered upon at Jerusalem.

A wedding in the East in the days of Jesus was a joyous event. It is so still, for hardly any change has taken place in the manners and customs of the Oriental. It was an occasion of great rejoicing and festivity,





*Photo. by American Colony, Jerusalem.*

CANA OF GALILEE, THE SCENE OF THE FIRST RECORDED MIRACLE OF JESUS.



*Photo. by American Colony, Jerusalem.*

THE VIRGIN'S WELL AT NAZARETH.







prolonged often for a week. The festivities usually took place at the house of the bridegroom or his father's house. On the day of the wedding the bridegroom, in his best attire, anointed and perfumed, and accompanied by what we should call the best man, the sons of the bed-chamber, went to the house of the bride. And this makes us think of the words of Scripture, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh ; go ye out to meet him." Waiting his coming, the bride was veiled from head to foot, but not as among us in Western lands, with a veil leaving all the features visible through the fine spider-like meshes of the bridal veil. If she were not a widow, her hair would be loose and flowing down her back. Around her head was a wreath of myrtle-leaves in gold or imitation. She, too, was perfumed, and upon her person she wore such jewels as she or her family possessed ; if they were too poor to possess any, she would wear all that could be borrowed for the occasion. Her bridal dress, perfumes, and other presents were the gift of the bridegroom. When the bride was taken from her father's house in the evening, all her young women friends and relatives sang in the procession ; each one, in anticipation of such a happy occasion for herself, did her best to make the bride happy. Torches, music, flowers, and songs made all merry. When some formalities were gone through, the festivities commenced, the bride rejoiced with her lady friends, and the groom was happy with his male friends. Not until the bride and bridegroom were finally alone, when all had gone, was her veil removed, that he might see her face. It was this ancient custom

which made it so easy for Laban to pass off upon Jacob his daughter Leah, instead of Rachel, for whom he had worked and waited for seven long years.

It was to such a feast that our Lord came on His return from the Jordan, within a week of the close of the Temptation. Never before had any wedding been graced by such a guest. Never before had such a remarkable thing taken place at a wedding as took place at this. Never before had any guest ever turned water to wine. On the threshold of His public ministry, this young Galilean Teacher gave wine for water, joy for sorrow, gladness for gloom.

Christ's presence at the wedding, along with His disciples, gave an entirely new idea to religion both to those He had chosen and all others. It proved clearly that all the engagements, and joys, and duties of life were to be lifted to a higher platform. Jesus Christ shared in the festivities of social life, and meant others to do so.

Henceforth the pleasures of life were not to be shunned as something low and coarse, but the humblest of them to be ennobled. Religion was not to be a thing of temples, and mountains, and deserts, but it must touch and glorify even the commonest things. Though Jesus never married, He rejoiced fully with those who did. Though He had no home to which to invite His friends for social intercourse, He readily accepted many invitations to the social gatherings of other men. And all this is not without its lessons.

Dr. Deems says :

“The lesson to the disciples and to the world is wholesome. They had been in the ascetic school of

John. In the very opening of His public career Jesus teaches them that all the courtesies of life are to be respected ; that no man is to be so great as not to give a portion of his time to the demands of society ; that indulgence in innocent pleasures should have the sanction of the loftiest and grandest natures ; that marriage is not to be discouraged because the work of some men in the world forbids them—as His forbade Him—to partake the blessed sweetnesses of married love ; and that He came not to destroy, but rectify ; not to sadden, but to transfigure all life by heightening the spiritual part of man and connecting his ordinary drudgery with the highest hopes ; by turning the water of ordinary existence into the wine of a generous, rich, and exhilarating life.”

That wedding at Cana is always an interesting story. Among all the weddings recorded in the pages of history, none ever attracted so much attention as this, except the story of Adam and Eve, in the Garden of Eden ; we know of none which can, for a moment, be placed by the side of it. Whether we consider the place at which it was consummated, the parties married, the marriage customs of the times, or the guests who were invited to the wedding feast, we shall find it an interesting study. But it is the presence of our Lord at this wedding which gives to it the chief charm, and the fact that it was the occasion of His first recorded miracle has given it an interest which will attract the attention of each succeeding generation to the end of all time.

You may ask me who were the parties being married ? Were they relatives of Jesus, or only friends and



neighbours ? The story as recorded by John gives us no real information, but from the position which Mary seems to take at the feast we may firmly conclude that, if they were not relatives, they must have been close friends. Her concern over the failure of the wine, the information she gave to Jesus, and her commands to the servants, after she had spoken to Him, all seem to indicate a close connection of some kind. We can hardly wonder that tradition has ever been busy upon this matter. One tradition makes John, the Apostle, to have been the bridegroom ; another, that the bridegroom was Simon the Canaanite—the latter epithet being a designation of his residence, not of his character.

As Simon Peter is known to us to have been a married man, it might have seemed more reasonable to fix upon him as the happy bridegroom, had we not known that he was of the town of Bethsaida ; but even thus there was nothing to prevent him marrying a woman of Cana.

One authority says that the wedding was of one of the sons of Alpheus and Mary, who were relatives of the mother of Jesus. Whilst another makes the bride and bridegroom to be Alpheus and Mary themselves.

It was a curious circumstance which led to the miracle. During the progress of the wedding feast it was suddenly discovered that the supply of wine had failed, and there was some likelihood that a little discredit would attach to those who had the management of affairs. In considerable concern and anxiety, Mary came to Jesus to inform Him of the fact. But

why tell Him of that ? Why name to Him so trivial an affair as the failure of the liquor ? Jesus was not the ruler of the feast. He was not the governor of the wedding festivities, nor was He the bridegroom, or responsible for the supply of wine. And yet Mary came to Him to tell Him. "They have no wine," said she, and what she said beside we would much like to know, but never may.

But there is something more than ordinary in this report to Him. Did she expect that He would provide in some remarkable way ? Did she, knowing Him perhaps better than any person then alive, think that He would exert some power which He possessed to supply the defect ? These are questions which the narrative not only suggests, but justifies. In spite of all that may be said to the contrary, I cannot resist the thought that Mary did believe that her Son would in some unusual way meet the need of the hour. She knew, as did none else, of His miraculous birth, she had never forgotten all the events which gathered round His childhood. How could she forget the marvellous words He had spoken to her and to her husband at the Temple, when He talked of being about His Father's business ? The words of the sacred historian, "This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth His glory," seem almost to preclude the idea that Jesus had worked any miracle before. For most people this word will be final and conclusive, they will ask nothing more, will push the question no further. But, it is in no want of reverence and love for the Gospel narrative

that I am unable to quite satisfy myself with this word. I find it hard to believe that from the age of twelve to the age of thirty the Divine glory that was in Jesus never shone through the thin veil of His flesh, never visibly made its presence known to others, never appeared to any. I can hardly conceive how any *kenosis*, any self-emptying of the Divine, could be so complete as to leave no trace of itself behind, no witness that it had ever existed, no suspicion that Jesus was anything beyond a man, just a carpenter and nothing else, just a son of Mary, and in no sort of sense the Son of God.

Even if Mary had never witnessed any extraordinary power displayed by Jesus, she must have heard something of the remarkable events of the last two months.

Our Lord's answer to Mary seems to us abrupt and strange. Accustomed as we are to render to the woman we call Mother the tenderest respect, and to speak of her with gentleness and love, this answer of Christ's seems a little wanting in kindness, and to contain almost a dash of rudeness which for the moment startles and pains us. In all ages these words have been noticed, and many and curious have been the expedients resorted to in order to explain them. Many of the ancients thought that the words conveyed a rebuke to Mary for attempting to control or force His actions, and some have even supposed that Mary was a little anxious to get glory for herself in the performance of some marvel by her Son. Whilst the words have a harsh sound to us, I do not think they contain the rebuke and the reproof which some have fancied.



The word woman, on His lips, and in those days, did not suggest disrespect. It is the word which Jesus used when He hung upon the cross, and committed His mother to the care of John, one of the five disciples present with Him at this wedding, and it is the same word which He used when speaking to Mary Magdalene in the garden after His resurrection. And as to the supposed rebuke, if we read the words in a free and generous sense, we shall see kindness rather than rebuke. "My mother, be not at all anxious about this matter. The proper time for acting has not yet come. When it is, I will supply all their need."

If this were Christ's meaning, His hour soon came. For He supplied them with an abundance of wine, and of such a character that the governor of the feast called, and complimented the bridegroom not only on the quality of the wine, but for wisely keeping the best until last. When the ruler of that feast invited Jesus to the wedding, little did he know, or even think, of all that was to happen. It never entered his head to imagine that it would be made the centre of admiration and wonder to millions of men through all time. He had no idea that a miracle of such a nature would be worked at the wedding, nor did he dream that it was to be made the scene of the manifestation of the Saviour's glory.

This miracle bristles with points of interest, and raises many questions for consideration. We may briefly notice a few.

Was it a real miracle? Did our Lord turn water into wine at all? Was it a trick? Is the account a

fable ? How is a miracle possible ? These are questions all of which have been asked again and again.

To admit either that this supposed miracle were merely a trick, or that the account is a fable, would at once destroy the historic character of the Gospel history, and render worthless what is prized by men of all ranks, in all lands, and of all times. For such an admission we are not prepared, and happily there is no need now to allow doubts to linger.

How different was this first miracle from anything we should expect or think ! Who would ever imagine such a case as this ? Should we ever dream that the Son of God, the Maker and the Redeemer of the world, would choose first to manifest His Divine power and majesty at a village wedding ? Beforehand we should expect that He would proceed to Jerusalem, summon a council of the heads and leaders of the people at, or near, the Temple, the centre of the religious life and thought of the day, and there perform His first miracle. In the midst of the doctors with whom He had conversed sixteen years before, or such of them as were alive, we should expect Him to give some visible and convincing proof that He is the Messiah whom their own prophet had taught them to expect. In such company and at such a place, in such a city, He would stand at the very centre of the Jewish world. Whatever He could do there, to startle and convince the Rabbis, would be sent out to the ends of the earth. But this was not His method. He chose a lowly home in the hills, far from Jerusalem, a little company of joyful weddingers, mostly lowly, if not all poor people,

at which, and among whom, to perform the first miracle which was to have a place on the page of sacred history, to be read all down the ages until the end of time.

You are sure to ask me the perplexing question : Did our Lord make intoxicating wine ? Around this question there have raged many fierce controversies. Some have said that two kinds of wine were known, and in use, in Palestine then, one of which had intoxicating properties to a larger extent than the other. And it was this latter kind of wine, say some, which Jesus made. I will not discuss the matter with you here, but will quote words of Henry Ward Beecher's :

“ Had Jesus, living in our time, beheld the wide waste and wretchedness arising from inordinate appetites, can anyone doubt on which side He would be found ? Was not His whole life a superlative giving up of His own rights for the benefit of the fallen ? Did He not teach that customs, institutions, and laws must yield to the inherent sacredness of man ? In His own age He ate and drank as His countrymen did, judging it to be safe to do so. But this is not a condemnation of the course of those who, in other lands, and under different circumstances, wholly abstain from wine and strong drink, for their own good and for the good of others. The same action has a different moral significance in different periods and circumstances. Jesus followed the harmless custom of His country ; when, in another age and country, the same custom had become mischievous, would He have allowed it ? ‘ All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient ’ (1 Cor. vi. 12). ‘ It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother . . . is made weak ’ (Rom. xiv. 21). ”



The lessons of this miracle are numerous, and I have already noted many of them. It suggested that Jesus intended to live and work among men. He would share the life, the joy, the gladness, the sorrows, and the pains of men. He would rebuke their sins, help them to carry their burdens, ease and heal their sore hearts, and sit down with them to share their festivities and social joys. It is suggestive, too, that He who refused to make the stones into bread to satisfy His own hunger, when He was faint and famishing, turned water into wine for the pleasure of His friends. And this, apparently, in one week from the time He came from the desert.

## CHAPTER XXII

### THE HORNS OF HATTIN

ERE we leave Cana of Galilee on our way to the “Horns of Hattin” and Tiberias, I must ask you to notice another remarkable event which took place here. Not only was this village the scene of the first miracle of Jesus, but the second miracle in Galilee was also at Cana. This time the scene was changed from a wedding to a sick son. The sorrowing father came to Jesus and begged him to come at once and heal his son. John, in the fourth chapter of his Gospel, says :

“Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where He made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum.

“When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judea into Galilee, he went unto Him, and besought Him that He would come down, and heal his son : for he was at the point of death. . . .

“The nobleman said unto Him, Sir, come down ere my child die.

“Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way ; thy son liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way.

“And as he was now going down, his servants met him, saying, Thy son liveth.”

It is not said who or what this nobleman was. The term "nobleman" could not have the same meaning then that we give to it now. It is probable that he was a King's officer, a courtier, or ruler of some sort. He may have been Herod's steward, whose wife Joanna was one of the good women who ministered unto Jesus. Whoever he was, he had no cause to regret that he met Jesus at this village.

This second miracle adds to the fame of Cana.

As we leave the village on our journey to the "Horns of Hattin," the place reputed as the scene of the famous Sermon on the Mount, we pass by the place where tradition says that Nathanael had his dwelling. Soon after we start we find ourselves on an extensive plain, in the tribe of Naphtali. It is a pleasant ride past several villages, and ere long we reach an interesting stretch of fairly level fields, out of which rises the curiously shaped hill called "Horns of Hattin," which in the distance looks almost like a huge beast with two great horns. These fields, at the foot of this hill, are famous for several things. Tradition says that it was here that Jesus on one occasion fed the multitude by His miraculous power. As you stand here you must use your imagination, and fancy you see the great company of men seated on the grass in rows, while the busy disciples and their assistants distribute the food among the people. When the hunger of the vast multitude was appeased, it was found that there was more food left than they had at the start.

Whatever may be the truth as to feeding the multitude on this spot, it is stated, with some show of



authority, that it was somewhere near here that at the close of the twelfth century a great and dreadful battle took place. It was here that the Cross and the Crescent met in savage conflict, when the Moslem and the Christian fought each other with bitter and deadly strife. The crusaders were defeated, after great slaughter, by Saladin, the Moslem leader. When the sun was setting on the day before the great conflict, the leaders of the crusaders, together with the Bishop who carried the Holy Cross, gathered together for conference and mutual encouragement at the Horns of Hattin. Ere night of the next day, most of the leaders of the Christian hosts were either prisoners or lay among the dead on the field. The Moslem was master. Here, then, we are at a spot which is not without historic interest.

Hattin, however, is far more famous because of the tradition, not very ancient, which makes it the scene of that remarkable sermon which is recorded in the fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters of Matthew.

That sermon is, in the judgment of the civilized world, the most remarkable on record. Whether we consider the Preacher, the place, the sermon—all alike are striking and worthy of notice. At this time Jesus had sprung into notoriety, and all Galilee was moved by His miracles. From every district people brought the sick, the halt, the lame, the blind, and He healed them all. Many who could only reach Him as they were carried by others, left His presence unassisted and whole.

The time had come when He was to enter upon a

new course of life. He determined that, like other teachers or Rabbis, He would have His students attached to Him, and who should attend Him as disciples. That marked a new era, a new starting-point in His career. So important did He feel that step to be that, before He took it, He retired into one of the mountain solitudes and spent the whole night in communion and prayer. We do not know which hill it is that was hallowed by His presence in it through the long hours of the night. But when day dawned, when the curtain of darkness was drawn back from the chamber of the skies, He was early astir. Followed by a multitude of people, all anxious to hear Him, He ascended this hill called "Hattin." Somewhere near its summit, to which place I have now brought you, He sat upon the grass, while the people arranged themselves below Him. The twelve men whom He had chosen to be His companions sat nearest to Him. One of the New Testament writers says "He ordained twelve." It was probably on this occasion that we now consider that He formally set them apart as His companions. These men were to be taught by Him of the Gospel of the Kingdom that they were to preach when He should be with them in person no more. We do not know that He left behind Him any written documents when He took His departure out of the world. These disciples were to be the books that men should read. This sermon may have been to them a sort of ordination charge. At any rate, it set forth the principles they were to proclaim and teach when He in person should be withdrawn from them.

Few places could have better served His purpose than this at which we are stopped. As He sat there in the soft air of that spring morning He was in the midst of lovely scenery. At His feet and all around Him bloomed large masses of wild-flowers, for which Galilee has always been famous, and still is. In His discourse He said :

“Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow ; they toil not, neither do they spin : and yet I say unto you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these ” (Matt. vi. 28).

He may just have pointed His finger at the flowers, for they were there. He was out of doors among them. There was no vaulted roof over His head except the cloudless sky. Just as He was speaking a flock of birds flew over Him and His hearers. This incident He also quickly seized upon and turned to good account in a lesson of Providence :

“Behold the fowls of the air,” He said, “for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns ; yet your Heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they ?” (Matt. vi. 26).

Down there in the hollow below Him was the beautiful lake of Galilee. Around it those cities, full of people, whose industry made the surrounding districts beautiful, bearing all manner of rich fruit. Away farther north, from the head of the lake, yonder as you can see, stood the peaks of the Lebanon Mountains, white with their perpetual snow.

You cannot help wondering what was the effect of



all this upon the twelve men who sat at His feet on Hattin, where we now stand. How did the sermon and the surroundings and the occasion strike them ? Were they impressed ? Did they grasp all the depth of meaning in many of the remarkable words which He spake ? We may get an idea if we remember what they were. They were not a company of students, who for years had sat at the feet of the great masters of Israel ; there was not a scholar among them. It is true that Matthew was a collector of customs, but that does not say much. Though these twelve men were to be the foundations on which He was to build up His Church, there was not a priest among them. He called no priest, He made no priest, nor did He ever command His people to appoint one.

Though they were to go into all the world to preach the Gospel, we do not know that any one among them had ever before left the shores of Palestine. On this subject I may remark that, though the religion which had its birth in Palestine was a universal system, adapted to meet the needs of the whole world, we do not know that its Author ever left the shores of this little land of Palestine. Though many of the twelve disciples afterwards became famous, at the beginning they were all just what we should call working men. Yet these were the men who were to preach a Gospel that should overthrow systems of heathenism venerable with age. These men, feeble and poor, were to become the preachers of a Gospel which in influence and power should surpass all the systems then known to the world.

Of the great sermon delivered on this remarkable occasion I need not say much. It is known to us all.\* It begins with a word of blessing, and ends with a word of security. Between the first and last words of this address there are many subjects dealt with, many principles propounded, and many doctrines set forth. Some of them are, even now, but little understood, and less practised. Some of them seem to be exacting in the sacrifices for which they call. But when men learn to put into practice these teachings of the Sermon on the Mount we shall have a different and better world than we have now.

At this point it may be well for me to tell you a little about the teaching of this great Preacher, as His work was so closely associated with Galilee, where we now are.

If our only records of the life of Jesus were Matthew, Mark, and Luke, we should imagine that He began and carried on His work almost entirely in Galilee. Before coming to Galilee to teach and work miracles He had spent many months in Jerusalem and Judea. About these months the three Evangelists are silent.

Of His visit to the Temple ; the expulsion of the traders from the sacred precincts of that building ; the excitement His reforming zeal had created, when He overthrew the tables of the money-changers ; the visit of the rich ruler Nicodemus ; the marvellous discourse which Jesus delivered to him (the first of all His recorded discourses of which we know) ; His preaching and popularity somewhere near to John Baptist ; His conversa-

\* Matt. v., vi., vii.

tion with a woman at Jacob's Well at Sychar ; and His two days' successful mission at Samaria, the first three Gospels have nothing to say. They pass over all these events almost as if they had never happened. It is to John, and to John alone, that we turn for information concerning all these.

And what is true of this previous mission in Judea is largely true of some subsequent visits which He paid to the south. In general terms it may be said that the writers of the first three Gospels have confined themselves almost entirely to the ministry of our Lord in Galilee, whilst the fourth has confined himself largely to a record of His work in Judea. And it was worthy of note that whilst Matthew, Mark, and Luke largely concern themselves with records of what Jesus did, John occupies much space in showing us what Jesus said. They let us see our Master at work in the external manifestations of His power, whilst John gives a fuller record of the inner life of the Saviour. They have left us records which all may read with interest, but he has given us history which can best be understood by sympathetic Christians. Theirs is history for the world at large, but his is for the believers in particular. These four writers complete each other, and all together furnish us with a glorious picture of the Son of God and the Son of Man.

It would seem that great popularity attended the teaching of Jesus in Galilee, backed and emphasized as it was by miracles and signs. Luke tells us that He was "glorified of all."

But it is not the popularity of His teaching which so



much concerns us as its importance. He was not always received with acceptance. As time went on, and He unfolded His doctrine concerning "the Kingdom of God," and openly rebuked the sins of His age, the crowds fell off and difficulties arose. But even then the importance of His teaching remained.

"Jesus Christ was," says Wendt, "the revelation of God to man. He came from heaven to dwell on earth among men, that men might have a larger and fuller knowledge of the will of God, and the way home to Him. It therefore follows that Jesus Christ and His teaching must be the standard for all Christians. All authority, therefore, whether of the theologian, or of the Church, or of the Scripture, or of Peter, or of Paul, or of the Jew, must be justified by agreement with Him. So far as any or all of these may be found opposed to His teaching, they must yield to His higher authority and bend before His august Majesty."

The teaching of Jesus was not delivered in systematic form, as we can see in this Sermon on the Mount.

Our Lord does not appear to have set Himself the task of giving complete lists of Christian duties in any one of His discourses. He seemed, rather, as occasion arose, and the need of the hour suggested, to speak out those eternal truths which were not of earthly origin. And yet, disjointed and impromptu as much of His teaching appears, the careful reader will observe such progress and development in it as to suggest and confirm the idea that all He said and did was the unfolding and working out of an original plan, a plan which He understood and knew. In modern

times men have recognized this development in the teaching of Jesus, and infer from it that He did not know the end from the beginning. Such was the "self-emptying" of the Son of God when He became man that it was only by slow degrees and steady steps that He came to understand His great destiny. And some have even said that it was "not until He saw the enmity of His enemies develop into murderous hate that He began to settle it with Himself that He must die. And when this was thus forced upon Him, then it was that He began to teach that a world which was so eager to kill its Saviour could only be saved by its Saviour's death."

There was, indeed, limitation in His teaching on many occasions, but it was in those whom He taught. Such was their ignorance and prejudice that He could only impart to men the truth in such form and such quantity as they were able to bear it. When they were capable of receiving more, He gave them more. When He talked with Nicodemus about the New Birth, the man exclaimed, in bewilderment, "How can these things be?" And if an educated man of the ruling classes could understand so little, what must have been the difficulty of the ordinary people! In teaching even His chosen disciples He often had to slack His pace and hold back truth until they could grasp it. "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now."

It is to be regretted that the teaching of Jesus has often been neglected in the Christian centuries. The authority of the Church, the Fathers, and the great

writers on theology have sometimes been appealed to rather than the Lord Himself. If we turn to the Epistles of the New Testament, it is surprising how little is there said about the teaching of Jesus. Even Paul, the most voluminous New Testament writer, has but little to say about what his Lord taught, though the story of His teaching must often have been told in those apostolic circles in which Paul moved. It almost seems, says Dr. Horton, "as if the wonder of the cross, the Resurrection and glorious Ascension of their Lord, obliterated in a blaze of glory all other considerations. Their minds were so filled and dazed with His triumph over sin and death, and His entrance into heaven, that as they stood in adoring gratitude around His empty tomb, and gazed up into heaven, where they saw Him sitting at God's right hand, they could think of but little else."

And yet it would hardly be fair to them, nor correct to imply, that they forgot anything about their Lord. We must not forget that to them He was infinitely more than a mere preacher of doctrine.

"There is hardly a page," says Dr. Dale, "of their writings in which it is not clear to the founders of the Christian Church that Christ was much more than an inspired teacher, or an example of perfect holiness. He is never out of their thoughts. All their teaching centres in Him, and in Him they find the sanction of every duty and the foundation of every hope. To the saved He is wisdom and righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. In Him all earthly relations are transfigured, and those who are one with Him have



already passed into the Kingdom of Heaven. His will is their supreme law ; His glory their supreme end ; His approbation their supreme reward. If sometimes it appears to us that they do not so much speak of their Lord as a teacher, it is because they were so overwhelmed with the thought of Him as their King, their Saviour, their God."

"For many months after the sermon delivered here at Hattin," says Père Didon, "His voice was heard in public, and manifestations of His power were witnessed in those regions. But what He saw here was to ring through the universe : the words spoken here were to be repeated to the four corners of the earth ; the work founded here and round the Lake Gennesaret, was to extend to every shore ; the law promulgated on the Mount was to be no passing and special code, but the eternal and universal code which should rule every conscience ; the miracles accomplished there were to be more than simple cures of the sick and afflicted—they were to be signs of the invisible healing of wounded hearts and paralytic souls, of darkened minds, of which the world is full. The chosen Apostles were to become the great Church, they were to be perpetuated through the ages, to invade the earth and conquer it for Christ."

"There was one note in the Sermon on the Mount which is ever recurring in all His discourses, and that is the ' Kingdom.' It appears in the opening sentences of this remarkable sermon. It is sometimes the ' Kingdom of God,' the ' Kingdom of Heaven,' but always the ' Kingdom.' In various forms and connections this great word kingdom appears over one hundred times in the short Gospels which record His

teaching. It was the theme on which He based all His discoveries during His life. And after His resurrection it was the topic on which He held conference with His disciples. The Kingdom of God was the one subject never absent from His mind. He came to establish it, to reveal its blessing, to teach its doctrines, to secure its permanence. He did not concern Himself, as we have seen, to establish a priesthood, to found what we call a Church, or to leave behind written books ; He sought to found a kingdom. The word 'church' is upon His lips but twice ; but the word 'kingdom' is upon His lips from first to last."

"Every word, every action of His life," says Père Didon, "had reference to it. When He preached it was to publish the Gospel of the Kingdom, and explain what it was ; when He taught the crowd on the mountain, it was to promulgate its laws ; when He spoke to the people in parables, on the shores of the lake, it was to set forth, in images, the mysteries of the Kingdom, its origin and evolution, its strifes and victories ; when He prayed and taught us to pray, it was that we should ask for its advent ; when He multiplied His miracles, it was to establish that He was its Founder and Lord ; when He chose His Apostles to be with Him, it was to perpetuate His Kingdom after Him ; and make sure that it would be extended in the heart of mankind ; when He died, it was that by His death He might overcome the obstacles which hindered its establishment."

Jesus did not introduce the idea of the Kingdom of God here at the Horns of Hattin. The Jews had long believed in it. It was an article of common

faith. His countrymen in Palestine looked for its approach, prayed for its speedy advent, and longed to be among its favoured subjects. It was of the speedy advent of the Kingdom that John Baptist preached with such burning words and stirring eloquence as to rouse the whole country and attract to his audiences people of every class in the nation. It was for the consolation of the Kingdom that such aged and sainted men as old Simeon waited ; and the hope of its appearance and establishment which gave inspiration and comfort to such men as Joseph of Arimathea. The Pharisees, always the opponents of Jesus, made its advent one of the subjects which they discussed with Him, whilst to eat bread in the coming Kingdom stood among the noblest of blessings.

But not only was this idea prevalent in their own land, but was held among the Jews scattered throughout the world. When the wise men came from the East to inquire at Jerusalem “ Where is He that is born King of the Jews ? ” they but gave voice to the aspirations and hopes which filled the breast, fired the soul, and kept aflame the patriotism of the Jews of the dispersion.

Nor can we wonder at this, if we reflect that much of their best religious literature had this idea embedded in it. The Book of Daniel had made the Hebrew race familiar with the idea. There the pious Jew read, in the glorious imagery of the book, not only that the Kingdom of God should be set up, but that it should supplant all others, and not be supplanted ; that it should be victorious and permanent ; for the God of heaven



would set up a kingdom which would never be destroyed.

Not only was this idea found in their Apocalyptic literature, but in the Prophets and Psalms. The prophets of Israel had exhausted all the resources of human language in their efforts to describe the glory, the wealth, the peace, and the joy of that day when the ransomed of the Lord should return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads, and sorrow and sighing should flee away. And to assist them in the expression of these ideas, the sweet singers of Judah had drawn upon all the powers of the harp and the human voice.

The teaching of the Jews concerning the Kingdom of God was not always the same. It passed through various forms, and took on different hues at various periods of their history.

The most ancient forms of belief concerning the "Kingdom" were among the most pure. The people of Israel were set apart as the specially chosen of the Lord whilst yet only a family. They were to be obedient to Him, to do His Will, to keep His commandments, and observe His laws. After centuries of discipline, sorrow, and trial, they were at length brought out of the house of bondage, and settled in the Land of Canaan. There they were declared to be God's peculiar people, a holy people, specially chosen above all peoples to be His. God was their King, and they were to serve Him.

"There was nothing new in the term Kingdom of God as used by Jesus in His preaching in Galilee,"

says the writer of "Ecce Homo." "The men in the crowds to whom He preached were familiar enough with it. But in His teaching concerning it there was much that was new, while to much that was old and current He gave a new and nobler meaning."

The Kingdom of God on the lips of Jesus did not mean a system of politics. It mattered but little to Him who sat on the thrones of the earth. He did not concern Himself with the centre of human government, whether it should be at Rome, or Jerusalem, or Athens. The throne of His Kingdom was to be in the hearts of men. The Kingdom of God is within, transforming, renewing, glorifying men. It is entirely independent of any earthly monarchy, and can exist under them all.

Every Jew in the audience of Jesus looked for great prosperity, peace, and happiness when the Kingdom of God should come. Had not the prophet told of weapons of warfare beaten into useful implements of husbandry? Were not all the wild beasts of the field to forget their ferocity, and the lion and the lamb lie down in peace together? Even the venomous viper, should not it cease to use its deadly poison, and should not a little child lead the denizens of the forest? Should not all this come to pass when the "Branch should spring forth out of the roots of Jesse"? In the face of all this, Jesus boldly taught that those who accepted His teaching, and became members of the Kingdom, must expect, not earthly prosperity, not the favour of man, not even long life, nor peaceful death. Poverty, privation, persecution, and even death

itself were among the things which He declared His followers must face. And yet, when all accept His teaching, and accept Him, then, indeed, will all the noblest hopes of the millennium glory ever published by the lips of man be realized. Then will righteousness flourish, the wilderness blossom as the rose, and the waste and solitary places be made glad. If to-morrow the old world woke up to accept Jesus Christ and fulfil the conditions of membership of His Kingdom, the reign of peace and love and brotherhood would begin.

If the Jews made mistakes concerning the Kingdom of God, Christians have not been free from error. If the Jews thought too much of the Kingdom as of this world, Christians have thought far too much of the Kingdom as of the world to come. It is sad to see how the Church and its sons have erred concerning the teaching of the Lord on this subject of the Kingdom—many of His words have been read as if He meant that His Kingdom, the Kingdom of God, had little or no relation to this life, and was to be looked for in regions beyond the clouds.

The Jew who thought of an era of peace, and love, and joy, and prosperity when His Messiah should come was not so much to be pitied as the Christian who reads into His Messiah's words a meaning which separates the Kingdom from all connection with the life that now is, and places it beyond the grave. Christ came to ennoble this life, to teach man to live the life of God on earth, that love, joy, peace, and righteousness may prevail among men. So far from the Kingdom



of God being separate from the affairs of the life that now is, it is to touch, and mould, and change it all. The Kingdom of God is like leaven hid in the meal which leavens the whole lump. It is to touch and mould the life of man under all skies, on all shores, of all conditions, until at His name every knee shall bow.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### TIBERIAS

WE must leave this interesting place of the Sermon on the Mount, and make our way to Tiberias. It will not take us long to reach the end of the level fields, and get to the place where the road to Tiberias becomes a rapid fall all the rest of the way.

I am sure you will want to linger a long while to take in the magnificent view of the Lake of Galilee and its surroundings, which we can now see as we approach. Yonder, at the foot of this steep road, the lake lies beautiful, calm, and peaceful, like a sea of silver. As seen from the height, it looks so restful and still, as its waters glitter in sunlight, that it is hard to think it can ever be disturbed and stormy. But from experience I know it can. You may go out upon the lake for a sail of some hours, and have a strange experience before you get back again. At the start all may promise well, a bright sun, calm waters, laughing boatmen, and pleasant company. When you are miles away from Tiberias, the place from which you start, suddenly the sun is hid, the wind springs up, and currents come down the various ravines and beat upon the lake. Soon its peaceful waters are lashed into

motion and fury, and your small boat is knocked about in a way that makes you think of the disciples of Jesus, who experienced a storm on this same lake. As the water dashes into the boat, wetting you and making you feel very uncomfortable, you wish yourself safe on the little landing-stage at Tiberias.

Well, there you see it now, as you look from this height. Yonder, on the other side, rise the hills, which seem to spring almost out of the water. Though they are bleak and bare, you see how glorious they look as the sunlight falls upon them. The tints are simply grand. Far over the hills and behind the mountains stretch the great districts known as the "Hauran," where great quantities of grain are now grown.

To the north of the lake in the far distance rise the ranges of Hermon. There, at the head of the lake, is Tel-Hum, the site of the ancient city of Capernaum, where some suppose that Jesus had a home for His mother after He was expelled from Nazareth.

But we must go down this winding road to Tiberias. The way down is very steep, and you will probably notice a remarkable change in the atmosphere before we reach the bottom.

Though Jesus must very often have seen Tiberias in His journey about this lake, and in crossing, we have no record that He ever visited it. There is not a single line which leads us to know that He ever set foot inside the city walls. And I have never been able to find any direct reference to this town in the New Testament, except one passage in John, which says that boats came from Tiberias. There are two other





*Photo. by American Colony, Jerusalem.*

THE MOUNT OF BEATITUDE, WHERE JESUS IS BELIEVED TO HAVE DELIVERED  
THE FAMOUS SERMON ON THE MOUNT.



*Photo. by American Colony, Jerusalem.*

A VIEW OF TIBERIAS FROM THE LAKE OF GALILEE.





places in which the word "Tiberias" occurs, describing "the sea of Tiberias." This omission of reference to this town is all the more remarkable when we remember that most of the disciples of Jesus were Galileans, and Jesus Himself spent nearly all His life in Galilee, and carried on most of His ministry in connection with the cities which lay around this lake.

Tiberias to-day is but a poor reflection of what it appears to have been like in ancient days. It would, no doubt, be a city of some importance in the days when Jesus lived. It was a comparatively new and modern city then. Josephus gives us an interesting account of its origin. I will quote the passage for you. You will find some parts of the passage quoted by nearly all writers who deal with Tiberias :

"And now Herod the Tetrarch, who was in great favour with Tiberius, built a city of the same name with him, and called it Tiberias. He built it in the best part of Galilee, at the Lake of Gennesareth. There are warm baths at a little distance from it, in a village named Emmaus. Strangers came and inhabited this city. A great number of the inhabitants also were Galileans, and many were necessitated by Herod to come thither out of the country belonging to him, and were by force compelled to be its inhabitants ; some of them were persons of condition. He also admitted poor people, such as those that were from all parts, to dwell in it. Nay, some of them were not quite free men, and these he was a benefactor to, and made them free in great numbers, but obliged them not to forsake the city by building them very good houses at his own expense, and by giving them land also : for



he was sensible that to make this place a habitation was to transgress the ancient laws, because many sepulchres were to be here taken away, in order to make room for the city of Tiberias : whereas our law pronounces that such inhabitants are unclean for seven days."

From this passage we may get a fair idea of what Tiberias was like, and of its age. The city was built in the finest part of Galilee. Its soil was rich, its surroundings most pleasant, and its climate very mild. It was planned and built after the Roman style, and to flatter the Roman Emperor, it was named after him. Its builder at first found some difficulty in peopling the new city, as Jews kept clear of it because of the graves which were discovered there, and which created ceremonial uncleanness. At length, however, he compelled men to occupy it by the gift of freedom, houses, gardens, and land. Herod lived there, and made his palace most beautiful. True, he offended some of the people by putting heathen ornaments on his house. But what cared he for their religious scruples ? Dr. Geikie tells us that the interior of the palace was furnished with lavish and imperial splendour. And when the city was finally stormed by the people, at the outbreak of war, lustres of Corinthian brass and whole table services of silver were carried off as plunder. The city itself was adorned with colonnades, and marble statues, and other attractive features.

The hot springs would attract many to the place, because of the healing virtue they were supposed to

possess. Just as at Bath, in England, many are drawn there for the cures which the springs are supposed to effect, so at Tiberias. The hot springs are still there, to the south of the town. But the palaces are gone, probably never to return. You will look in vain for the Royal Palace, the great theatre, and other noble buildings which once stood there, and adorned the city. The city as it was first dedicated was far more extensive than the present city.

The walls of the ancient Roman city may be traced. There is to-day a wall around the city, in some parts broken and dilapidated. By an earthquake in 1837 the town was greatly injured, and many were killed. There are some who suppose that the ancient city mentioned in the Bible by the name of Hammath (Joshua xix. 35) stood here. That city, or whichever city stood here before Tiberias was built, was far more extensive than the present one. It probably extended as far south as the present hot baths, and on the west took in a great deal of the hillside. The ancient graves found there may, in part, account for the absence of Jesus and His disciples from Tiberias if, as some have argued, He never entered its portals nor trod its streets. It must, however, have become an important Jewish place early after the days of Jesus. When Jerusalem was destroyed, Tiberias became a great centre of the Jewish people. It was here that some of the great Hebrew scholars and their students found a dwelling. It was from this place that some of the important works of the Jews were issued. The Sanhedrin of the Jews had its meeting-place here.

A large Jewish synagogue stood at Tiberias, and there were many Jews at the city not long after it was built. Many stories and legends are told about this place and its connection with the Jewish people. There are Jews, it is said, who sincerely believe that when their Messiah comes—and they are still expecting Him—He will arise out of the lake, and make His presence felt in the city. He will gather together His people at this town, and then march in a triumphant procession with them to Safed. There He will set up His throne, and reign through the ages.

The bulk of the population to-day is Jewish. Some say they are as two in every three of the inhabitants. The town is dirty. Its streets are narrow, and not by any means attractive. I am told that many of the Jews here, like not a few at Jerusalem, live not so much on the result of their own labour as on the gifts of richer Jews in other parts of the world.

There have been early Christian Churches here, and Christianity still has a place at Tiberias. Both the Greeks and Latins are represented, and carry on good work among the people. The Greek Church claims to be as old as the Crusaders ; its present building dates from the 'sixties of the last century. To the north of the town are the ruins of an old Saracen tower, and you will get a fine view from there. One of the finest sets of buildings and noblest institutions in Tiberias you will find in the northern part of the city—the grand hospital and premises of the Scottish Mission. The institution is well worth a visit. In my diary I find these words about Tiberias :



“ Soon after three o’clock to-day Sea of Galilee came into full view, and soon after we saw Tiberias. We passed through the town on our way to the camp. The town has the reputation of being the dirtiest town in Palestine, and after seeing it I can believe it.”

This description of the place is probably a little exaggerated, but I see no reason to modify it so far as relates to the place when I first saw it. Twenty years have made some difference to it ; still, I seldom enter the town now when I go. I usually advise pilgrims to keep out of the town as much as they can. It is a charming district, the atmosphere is mild and genial in the spring, and the outlook over the lake at the distant hills and mountains simply charming. There is nothing of interest to be seen in the town itself, and it is just as well that you should keep out of it. Most writers speak of it much as I have done, and some of them even say more.

There is a Jewish educational establishment at Tiberias which is of some note. At that school students may study the Sacred Books of the Hebrews. There is also a clean little hotel in which we can always find rest and refreshment. It is kept by a German, who is a most obliging and intelligent man. I have slept in this hotel, and the coolest and best part of it in which to rest is the basement. If you remember that here in this town you are over six hundred feet below the level of the sea, you will expect to find it warm enough if you arrive late in the season. On one of my visits I remember a lady being very much distressed because she had been given a bedroom in this

hotel which was one story down. She came to me in her distress, and told me such a story of her trouble, and how badly she felt she was being treated, and all the rest of it. Knowing the place better than she did, I quietly suggested that she had better go to her room and say no more about the matter, as she would probably find out before morning that instead of being treated badly she had been highly favoured, and given one of the best and coolest rooms in the house. She found it even as I stated to her.

Tiberias is the town at which you engage boats for sailing on the lake. There is a small wooden landing-place. When I first visited this place there was no landing-place of any kind. The boatmen had to lift the passengers into and out of the boats. When the pilgrims happened to be thin and spare of flesh, like the writer of these lines, there was not much trouble ; but when they were corpulent, and nervous into the bargain, it was not always a pleasant experience.

There is one Biblical story connected with this town that I like to read. It is of the miraculous draught of fishes recorded in Luke v. 1-11, which happened opposite to Tiberias.

On one occasion, when Jesus was preaching on the shore of the lake, He was sorely pressed by the people. To avoid harm, He stepped into one of the boats, which was apparently owned by Simon. When the boat was pushed off a little from the land, He sat down and talked to the crowd which lined the shore. When He had finished His address to the people, He turned to the owner of the boat and bade him go farther from

the shore. The narrative, as Luke records it (v. 4-8), is most interesting :

“ Now when He had left speaking, He said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught.

And Simon answering said unto Him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing : nevertheless at Thy word I will let down the net.

“ And when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes : and their net brake.

“ And they beckoned unto their partners, who were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink.

“ When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus’ knees, saying, Depart from me ; for I am a sinful man, O Lord.”

There is a Latin monastery just near the hotel, where pilgrims are entertained for the night. It is said that the marvellous catch of fish took place just opposite and near this monastery. If this pretty tradition be accurate, and has any foundation in fact, it would seem to belie those writers who think that Jesus never entered Tiberias. If these boats, filled with the catch of fish, were near to Tiberias, it seems reasonable to assume that they, with their burdens and their passengers, would be landed at this place.

When I take you away from Tiberias we shall proceed northward on horseback on our way to Damascus. If, however, you make another visit to the Holy Land, and want to get to Damascus without spending the days on horseback, you can get there by a much



quicker route. You can now take a boat at Tiberias, and sail for between two and three hours to a place called Samach. There you get the train, and can be in Damascus that evening. I have several times travelled over this route, and can testify that it is a most interesting and fascinating journey.

One part of the railway ride through what is called the Yarmuh Valley is beyond my power to describe.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### THE SEA OF GALILEE

AT last we have reached the Sea of Galilee. I think it may be said that this is the most interesting sheet of water in the whole world. There are lakes elsewhere into one corner of which this Galilean lake could easily be put. But not one of the great lakes known to us has a fame at all comparable to this.

I shall never forget the first full view I had of it, nor will you ever forget if ever you should see it. I have gazed at it in the sunlight, I have seen it at the sunrise, and I have looked at it in the sunset, and in the moonlight. I have ridden around most of it. I have encamped by its side, have sailed over its waters from south to north, and have plunged into it, both from the side and from a boat in the centre. The more I see of it, the oftener I come to it, and the more I like it. I should like to spend a whole spring season about its shores.

The following words from my original diary will let you see how it impressed me on my first visit, and my last was more impressive still.

“ Oh beautiful Sea of Galilee ! It looks like a sea of silver, calm and still ; it lies there looking so peaceful

that one almost thinks it could be no other than still. . . . Every inch of the district is teeming with Biblical interest. On this water the Saviour walked. Yonder, across the lake, is the district of Gadara, where the Saviour cast the evil spirits out of a man, and somewhere opposite, the rock down which the swine ran into the sea. Along the shores of this lake our Saviour spent the chief part of His public life. Cast out at Nazareth, He came to live somewhere near here. It was near here, perhaps on the other side of the lake, where Jesus fed the multitude on one occasion. It was on these waters that Peter walked at the command of his Lord. It was out of these waters the fish was taken with the money in its mouth to pay tribute with. And it was on the shores of this lake that Christ appeared to the fishermen after His Resurrection. . . . Have just been to look at the lake in the moonlight, when all was calm and still. It is beautiful. Right across the lake I can see the reflection of the hills in the water. . . . Out before six this morning. It is the warmest morning we have had so early. How calm, and still, and quiet the lake is, and how beautiful in the morning sunlight !”

The above extract does but poor justice to the beauty and the glory of this sea, as it is called in Scripture. It is the largest sheet of water in the Holy Land, except the Dead Sea. To Americans it looks insignificant as to its size, and to Englishmen the same sense of smallness is present. Its whole length is less than thirteen miles, and its greatest width is six and three-quarter miles. It lies at a depth below the Mediterranean Sea of 680 feet. In shape the lake resembles a large pear, with the widest end towards the north.



The hills on the east of it are fairly regular in height, and in colour are mostly brown. But in the sunlight they change colour and have many hues—so attractive that they must be seen to be understood. Seen either at sunrise or sunset, the tints of those hills gladden the man or woman of artistic taste. On the west you can see over yonder the peaks of the Horns of Hattin that we left some time ago. The view yonder to the far north is interesting, for there stands Hermon with its ever white cap of snow. It is farther from us than it looks to be as we gaze at it from the lake. Along the shore you will find much to interest you.

If you stop your boat in the centre of the lake, that you may have a long look around, you will get a wonderful view. First of all, you are struck with the quietness of the place. Everything seems hushed and still as an English Sunday afternoon. No sign of life of any kind except in the movement of a fish in the water, or the flight of a startled bird nearer the shore. Can it really be that around this lake, now so forsaken and still, there once stood many cities with their teeming Eastern life? Is it possible that once two millions of souls peopled the places that were around and near to this sheet of water? Is it really true that once a royal residence stood on these shores, and that vast numbers of proud Roman officials could be seen in their beautiful homes out here where now all is still as death? It seems hard to realize that many companies of Roman soldiers kept order and enforced Roman discipline and law around this lake. If the facts of history did not confirm the belief that these things really were in the

days of Jesus, some might be sceptical. But there it is—the records of history leave us no room for doubt.

Presently, we will look at some of the places around this lake, where great things were done, and wonderful addresses delivered, all which places are now almost entirely blotted out. Meanwhile, as we sit in this boat in the middle of the lake, it will be well to note a few things respecting it and the district. The lake still abounds with fish, and when we go back to the little hotel and have our dinner in the evening, we shall be served with fish which at this moment are alive and swimming in this lake.

The Biblical associations of this place and its connection with the life of Jesus would fill a volume. I suppose there is not a boy or girl in any land where Christianity has made any considerable headway that does not know something about this inland sheet of water.

It is known by several names in Holy Scripture. In the Old Testament it is called “the Sea of Chinnereth,” and the “Sea Chinneroth,” and seems to have been included in the portion of the land given to the Reubenites and the Gadites. In the New Testament it is known by three different names: “the Sea of Galilee,” “Lake Gennesaret,” and “the Sea of Tiberias.” It takes this name from the town which still stands upon its shore, and is the only one of any importance to be found there now. Beside all the towns whose names secular writers give us, the Gospels tell us of several important cities which stood around the lake, some of which were visited by

Jesus. There was Tiberias, Magdala, Bethsaida, Chorazin, and Capernaum.

It was on the shores of this lake that He called to be His disciples three who seem to have been among His most favoured friends of that little company, James, Peter, and John. It was as He sat in a boat on this lake, nearer the shore than we now are, that He spake several important parables, which are read to-day in churches all over the civilized world. Among them are the parables of the Sower ; Wheat and Tares ; the Leaven ; and the Net cast into the Sea. Perhaps the most remarkable of all the incidents in connection with this lake, is that recorded in Matt. viii. 23-27 :

“ And when He was entered into a ship, His disciples followed Him.

“ And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves : but He was asleep.

“ And His disciples came to Him, and awoke Him, saying, Lord, save us : we perish.

“ And He saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith ? Then He arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea ; and there was a great calm.

“ But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him !”

Do you wonder that they marvelled ? How could they help it ? Would not you have been astonished if you had been there ? Indeed, men still marvel over this incident. Not once, but often, I have said to myself, Who is this, that one moment sleeps in the wild storm like an innocent child, and the next rebukes



the elements, stills the tempest, and calms the sea? Surely the world never saw His equal. Never before or since have men seen such displays of a power which is above and beyond that of a mere man.

Here, then, we are on this historic—this sacred—lake, at a place to which we may be quite sure that Jesus came. He carried on His early ministry here, sailed the waters of this lake, often rested upon it, drank its waters, and consecrated it for ever by His presence and some of His miracles and marvellous teachings. And as it must have been an attractive and charming place in His days, so it is now one of the most attractive in the Holy Land.

We must now go back for lunch, and after it I will take you on a tour along the western shores of the lake as far as the north. In that little tour we shall see the remains of what once were great and important centres.

I must take you now from Tiberias to Tel-Hum—that is, to Capernaum. There are two ways of performing this journey. One is along the road which skirts the lake, either on horseback or on foot; the other is by boat on the lake. I have done both, and can testify that either is interesting, but the road is the more attractive of the two. I will take you by the road, and bring you back by boat, so that you will have the advantage of both. Now we mount our horse and start.

We pass several places of some interest, and soon arrive at Megdel, that is Magdala. It is a poor little, dirty, poverty-stricken village, with but few houses,

and not many inhabitants. Once a city stood here of some importance. I may remark in passing that Magdala is just opposite to the widest part of the lake, which is at this point some six and three-quarter miles across.

Magdala is chiefly remembered as being the town of Mary Magdalene, that remarkable woman who was among those attached to the person of Jesus. I should like to point out to you that few, if any, women in history have ever been so sadly misrepresented as this Mary. It has been the custom to speak of her as if she had been a notorious sinner. Some have identified her as the woman from the city streets, who came into the presence of Jesus. Many buildings erected in modern times for the shelter and reclamation of our sinning sisters have been called "Magdalene Homes," or "Magdalene Asylums," thus implying that Mary had once been of this class. I have no hesitation in saying that there is not one scrap of evidence for any such assumption. I do not know a single line in the New Testament which makes her to be a bad or wicked woman. All I can find is that she is spoken of as the woman "out of whom He cast seven devils." I have yet to learn that there was anything immoral in being possessed by evil spirits. Does not this simply mean that she had been the subject of some affliction that we should call mental derangement or epilepsy? Surely no one will say that those so afflicted to-day are notorious sinners above all others. No doubt some of the confusion as to Mary Magdalene has arisen through confounding



her with the "woman who was a sinner," mentioned in Luke vii. 37.

As we pass on, we get another sight of the Horns of Hattin yonder. Soon we reach the Plain of Genesareth, about a mile wide, and running back from the shore about three miles. This plain, little as it is, seems fruitful as the garden of God. It is one of the most fruitful plains in the Holy Land, both fruit and flowers grow here in abundance.

We pass the spot from which we can see Bethsaida.

Around Bethsaida there gather many interesting traditions. We are told that Peter, Andrew, James, John, and Philip all had their residence here. And there is a tradition which says that it was on the shore here that Jesus delivered that memorable sermon to which I have referred, in which is included the Parable of the Sower.

We soon arrive at Tel-Hum, said to be the site on which the ancient city of Capernaum stood. I know there are some who place that city elsewhere, but I see no reason to doubt that this may be the site on which at least a part of that city stood. It was at Capernaum that Jesus is believed to have made a home for His mother after His countrymen drove Him out of Nazareth, the home of His youth. Nazareth would not be a happy place for Mary after what had happened to her Son on the occasion of His expulsion. It is curious how little is said of Joseph, the husband of Mary, after the time that Jesus was twelve years of age, and returned with Joseph and Mary from Jerusalem to Nazareth. From this I infer that he was dead.



Tradition usually makes him older than Mary, and the artists usually so paint him. If I am correct in this assumption, I draw the conclusion that Jesus would have the care of His mother, and perhaps her support. And if this be so—in this matter, as well as in others—He became an example to all young men.

Capernaum was a great and important centre of Roman authority. Much trade was carried on here. It was on the great highway of the travellers and caravans passing through the land. Men of all nationalities were found on its streets. In it Jesus often spoke and toiled for the benefit of the people. It had great privileges, and did not use them. It was of this city and of Bethsaida and Chorazin—which lie about two and a half miles below Capernaum—that Jesus spake the terrible words which I here quote from Matt. xi. 21-23 :

“ Woe unto thee, Chorazin !

“ Woe unto thee, Bethsaida ! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they had a great while ago repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes.

“ But . . . it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you.

“ And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell. . . .”

These fearful words have had their literal fulfilment, if we interpret them to mean ruin, destruction, and obliteration. Capernaum, as you can see, has gone. Its once great and noble buildings have all disappeared, its public offices, its military centres, its attractive

and beautiful baths—all have gone. Not one is left. It cannot even be said that the city sits solitary that was once full of people. The very site of the city, as we have seen, is in doubt. I must get you to look at these marble ruins that are now before us as we stand here at the place where Capernaum is supposed to have been. Some few years ago there was a garden over these magnificent ruins, and only one or two pieces of stone were to be seen. These were supposed to have been part of a Jewish synagogue which in ancient days stood here. On one of my visits I was fortunate enough to be here while excavators were at work, and I saw them laying bare these very interesting ruins. The German Oriental Society got permission to work here, and their labours were well rewarded. It had long been supposed that beneath the garden, which the monks carefully worked, as they do the adjoining land, there were ancient ruins of some kind. When the Germans got to work with native labour—men, women, and children, such as I saw removing the rubbish—they were soon rewarded with the find we now see before us. In only a few weeks they had these marvellous stones all in view.

You may ask me of what are they the remains? What was the building of which they once formed a part? It has been said that these stones are the remains of the great synagogue which stood here in the days of Jesus. If this be so, then this would be the building called the Great White Synagogue, which was erected and given to the Jews by the Roman commander. That building was some seventy-four feet

long, and about fifty-six feet wide. It was called white because it was composed of white marble. You will see that these ruins are white. If this really be the site of that synagogue, and these stones are part of that ancient building, it follows that we are at one of the most precious and sacred spots known to man, outside the city of Jerusalem; for it was here that Jesus delivered His remarkable sermon on the Bread of Life, which is recorded in the sixth chapter of John.

Beyond Tel-Hum, out yonder, half an hour away, you will find the place where the Jordan enters this lake, and then flows right through the midst of it, passing out at the south on its way to the Dead Sea.

We must now take to the boats and return to the hotel by the way of the lake itself. Have a good look at the natives who manage the boat that takes us back. Do you think you can see Peter, or James, or John? I have often fancied, in my many sails on this lake, that I could see some of the disciples, but never yet have seen one that made me think he might resemble our Lord.

As there is a good wind now, you will see how these boatmen know how to manage the sails. On one visit of mine, a few years ago, I was returning from Capernaum in a boat, as we now do, when a black cloud suddenly came over us, and the wind got up. The sail was quickly put down, and the lake, ere long, was in a state of such great restlessness that I, and those with me, really began to be afraid. It made us understand, in a way that no description could, how this peaceful



lake may suddenly threaten to engulf any boat upon its surface.

Now that we are landed, and the meal is not quite ready for us, let us sit outside in the genial air and watch the sunset. Yonder it is, a great ball of glowing fire. See how it illumines those eastern hills, and paints them with a glory that charms us. Now that you have lost sight of the sun, notice over yonder, across the lake, how the hills can be seen reflected in clear outline in the water.

## CHAPTER XXV

### TIBERIAS TO DAMASCUS

THERE are three ways in which pilgrims may travel from Tiberias to Damascus. I have been over all three. It may interest you if I tell you of them all. Each one is interesting in its way. You may take a boat on the lake here, sail to Samach, and thence you can go by rail to Haifa, then by steamer to Beyrout, and thence by train to Damascus.

Or you can, when at Samach, instead of going to Haifa by train, go in the opposite direction to Damascus, and you will be there the same evening. This is the easiest, the quickest, and the cheapest way, and most people now take it, especially those who are pressed for time. I am, however, intending to take the slowest, the dearest, but by far the most interesting and most pleasant way. We shall go from Tiberias on horseback, and take several days over the journey to Damascus. We shall occupy our pretty tents each night. On the way we shall see some interesting places which most pilgrims miss who hurry through the land by train, only getting a peep at some places, and altogether missing others.

The first place at which we stop for a good look

round is at the third lake of Palestine. I dare say there are thousands of people who seem to know a good deal about Palestine, but who only know that it has two lakes—Lake of Galilee and the Dead Sea. But I have brought you to the third. It is called “Lake Húleh.” It is the most northern of the three lakes, and by far the smallest, as you can see: for I have taken you to visit both the others. This one is four and a half miles long, three and a half broad, and not much, if any more, than a dozen feet deep at the deepest part. When you are close to it, it has much the appearance of a great swamp. The cultivation of cotton has been carried on by Jews who have settled near here. It is not over-healthy at this place at certain seasons of the year; as you will expect from the swampy nature of the place there is not a little malaria, and the sooner we leave it the better.

In the Old Testament, this lake is spoken of as “the waters of Merom.” The name Húleh does not occur in the Scriptures, and so we must think of it by the other name—Merom. It is associated with the Bible in a remarkable passage in Joshua, eleventh chapter. From this scripture it appears that a large number of petty kings—four of whom are mentioned by name—with their fighting men gathered together near where we now stand. They were a great multitude, so great that the sacred writer speaks of them as the sand of the sea for multitude. There was the King of Hazor, the King of Madon, the King of Shimron, and the King of Achshaph and many others. I quote here a few of the words of the narrative which gives us a graphic



description of the great battle which took place between these hordes and the soldiers of Joshua.

“And they went out, they and all their hosts with them, much people, even as the sand that is upon the sea shore in multitude, with horses and chariots very many.

“And when all these kings were met together, they came and pitched together at the waters of Merom, to fight against Israel.

“And the Lord said unto Joshua, Be not afraid because of them : for to morrow about this time will I deliver them up all slain before Israel : thou shalt hough their horses, and burn their chariots with fire.

“So Joshua came, and all the people of war with him, against them by the waters of Merom suddenly ; and they fell upon them.”

Hence it seems that these waters were once crimson with the blood of the slain ; whilst its shores were illumined by the fire which devoured the chariots of the enemy. I must give you another passage from my old diary, and then pass on to Banias.

“We have just reached the top of a hill from which we have a delightful view of the Waters of Merom, with snow-capped Hermon beyond us. Behind us we see Lake Galilee. To our left are the hills of Naphtali. . . . We have just lunched at the head of the Waters of Merom, or Lake Húleh. It seems very curious that we should be here almost melted with heat, while yonder we can see the snow on Mount Hermon, nor does it seem far from us.”

Our next stopping-place is Cæsarea-Philippi, or the ancient Banias. This is a most beautiful and inter-

esting place, beautiful because there is plenty of water here, and interesting because of its ancient history, and also because of its Biblical association. This was once, without doubt, a heathen city, and was so from time immemorial,. All travellers agree that this was indeed one of the beauty spots of the land when Jesus lived and visited it. It lies at a point extreme north of the boundary of ancient Israel. The shepherd god Pan was worshipped here—there are still some traces of that fact left on the rocks which rise here. From beneath a great rock there flows a constant stream of clear, sweet water from the unknown depths below. This is one of the never-failing sources of the Jordan. Trees in abundance are here, as you see, and it is a fruitful district. Before Christ was born, the ruler Philip had rebuilt and beautified the city at great cost. He lavished great wealth upon it, adorning the place with altars, images, and statues in honour of Cæsar Augustus. He gave it the name of the Emperor, but in order that it might be distinguished from another Cæsarea on the coast, the name of Philip was added, and so it is called in the New Testament Cæsarea-Philippi. Herod, the father of Philip, had erected here a beautiful white marble temple at an earlier period.

The scriptural associations of this place will interest you far more than its heathenish character.

No one denies that Jesus came here. And when He was here He was at the nearest point to the Heathen that He ever came during His earthly life. There are not a few Biblical students who fix this district

as the scene of the Transfiguration of Jesus. Whilst some have marked off Mount Tabor as the scene of that great event, this district seems to possess the greater probability. I quote the passage which I wrote describing Banias on my first visit.

“It is located in a charming hollow. . . . A number of beautiful trees grow by the stream. Probably the Transfiguration took place here . . . . As a place I think this is one of the prettiest I have seen. I am now seated on a great boulder in the source of the Jordan, with trees over me, and running water at my feet.”

The words I wrote twenty years ago are far too mild, and did but scant justice to the beauties of this district.

The chief Biblical interest of this place gathers round a passage in Matthew xvi. 13-19, which I must here quote to you in full :

“When Jesus came into the coasts of Cæsarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of Man am ?

“And they said, Some say that Thou art John the Baptist : some, Elias ; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am ?

“And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

“And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona : for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven.

And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church ; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

“And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom



of heaven : and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven : and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

This passage must for ever make famous the place at which it was spoken. The passage itself has given rise to great controversy between the Roman and Protestant Churches. The former claims that these great, these tremendous, these august powers given to Peter are now possessed by the successors of Peter, the successive heads of the Roman Church. The Protestants, on the other hand, claim that the words are said of Peter, not as a person, but as a representative confessor, and belong to all who make the great confession ; whilst there are but few that pretend to understand all that Jesus meant when He spake to Peter, Protestants point out that whatever He may have given to Peter, He gave to all the rest of the disciples, as recorded in Matt. xviii. 18. But I do not write as the controversialist. It is no part of my purpose to enter upon a theological discussion in these pages. I have not brought you out here to this land or to this place to assume the rôle of the partisan ; but to show you the places, and tell of the events which took place at them. So I leave the dispute and travel on.

Our next stopping-place is at a Druse village on the slopes of Hermon. My old diary says :

" At four-thirty to-day our riding was done. We reached this town or village, which is right on the slopes of Hermon. It is a considerable place with houses of stone. We have been nearly roasted all day from nine to three o'clock. Before and after

these hours it was cool. It seems curious to ride in a tropical heat, and then camp on a mountain-side with snow within a few minutes of us. The intense heat of yesterday and to-day has played havoc with some of our party. I will tell you a secret. I believe the water-drinkers are going through their trials and dangers better than the wine and brandy-drinkers. . . . You would be interested if you were here to see the beautiful faces of the children. The boys, and girls, and women of the place have swarmed down upon us to sell various little things and to beg. We are in the Lebanon district. . . . As it is Good Friday to-morrow, we have had Communion Service in the tent. An Anglican clergyman conducted it, and I enjoyed it."

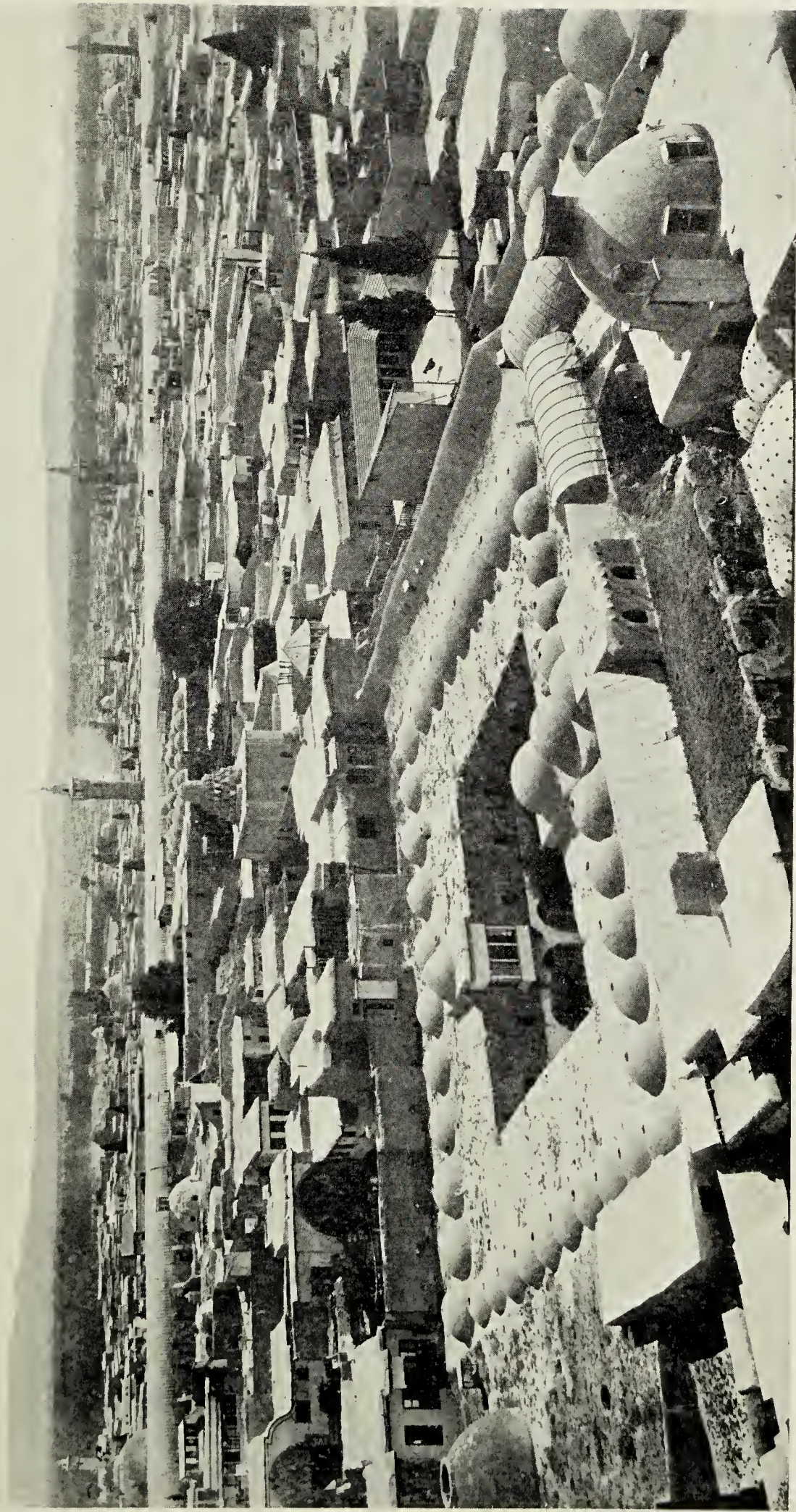
I must tell you a little more about that Holy Communion Service to which the diary refers. As we were on the eve of Good Friday, and knowing that we should be travelling and enter Damascus next day, and that we should have but little opportunity for worship even if we desired it, we decided to have Holy Communion in one of the tents. We were a mixed company. In political opinion and religious denominations we were as far apart as men and women could be. For instance, in politics we were Conservative, Liberal, Republican, and Anti-Home-Ruler. In nationality we were English, Irish, American, and Dutch. In religion we were Catholic and Protestant, Episcopal and Free Church, Swedenborgian and Dutch Reform. What kind of service could we hope would be acceptable to a company of twenty people so opposite in religious belief and practice ?

It occurred to me that if there could be any service

in which unity could be secured, with such a mixed group, it was the Lord's Supper. And as I felt the longing for worship of some kind, I spoke to a clergyman of the party, and he agreed with me, that we might try the Communion Service for such of our comrades as were willing. So we borrowed the largest tent in the camp ground. We got candles and stuck them into bottles, put a white cloth on the little table, and begged some bread and wine from the cook. We duly notified the fact that service would be held at a time we fixed, after dinner. We began to assemble. Outside it was very dark, and inside we only had the light of the candles on the table. The clergyman, who had his official robes with him, made his appearance just as if he were at home in church for service. There we were, Catholic, Protestant, Churchmen, and Chapelmen—English, Irish, and Dutch. I do not remember that I ever enjoyed a Communion Service more than I did the service in that old tent, far, far from home and those I loved most on earth.

And now I must bring you on to the ancient city itself. To-day we have had the least interesting of our day's journeys. We pass over bleak, bare, uninteresting hills and plains until we get near to Damascus, the place at which Paul was converted. We have on our journey through Palestine been tracing the footsteps of Jesus. Now we are on the track of St. Paul, the great Apostle of the Gentiles. I have not a shadow of doubt in my own mind that in our pilgrimage we have often struck his track if we had only known it. He came not as we come with peace and





A GENERAL VIEW OF DAMASCUS SHEWING PART OF THE "STREET CALLED STRAIGHT."  
*Photo. by American Colony, Jerusalem.*





good-will, but with enmity and hatred in his heart, and letters of authority in his pocket, to bind and imprison either men or women who had ventured to take upon themselves the profession of Christ. We shall better understand the temper in which he came to the place where we now are if we read the passage in the ninth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, verses 1-9, which describes him :

“And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest, and desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus : and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven : And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying to him,

“Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me ?

“And he said, Who art thou, Lord ?

“And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest : it is hard for thee to kick against the goads.

“And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do ? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go unto the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do . . . they led him by the hand, and brought him to Damascus. And he was three days without sight, and did neither eat nor drink.”

As near as is known, we have reached the spot at which he was unhorsed and thrown to the ground.

There is a beautiful passage in the “Life of Paul,” by Conybeare and Howson, which describes the journey of Paul and the appearance of Damascus. I will quote



it, as it sets forth the incident in very choice language. The quotation may well close this chapter :

“No journey was ever undertaken on which so much interest is concentrated as this of St. Paul from Jerusalem to Damascus. It is so critical a passage in the history of God’s dealings with man, and we feel it to be so closely bound up with all our best knowledge and best happiness in this life, and with all our hopes for the world to come, that the mind is delighted to dwell upon it, and we are eager to learn, or imagine, all its details. . . . It is difficult to guess what was the appearance of Saul’s company on that memorable occasion. We neither know how he travelled nor who his associates were, nor where he rested on his way, nor what road he followed from the Jordan to the Syrian capital. His journey must have brought him somewhere into the vicinity of the Sea of Tiberias. But where he approached the nearest to the shores of this sacred lake—whether he crossed the Jordan where, in its lower course, it flows southwards to the Dead Sea, or where its upper windings enrich the valley at the base of Mount Hermon—we do not know. . . . When some eminence is gained, the vast horizon is seen stretching on all sides like the ocean, without a boundary ; except where the steep sides of Lebanon interrupt it, as the promontories of a mountainous coast stretch out into a motionless sea. The fiery sun is overhead, and that refreshing view is anxiously looked for — Damascus seen from afar, within the desert circumference, resting, like an island of Paradise, in the green enclosure of its beautiful gardens.

“The white buildings of the city gleamed then as they do now, in the centre of a verdant, inexhaustible

Paradise. The Syrian gardens, with their low walls, and waterwheels, and careless mixture of fruit and flowers, were the same then as they are now. The same figures would be seen in the green approaches to the town : camels and mules, horses and asses, with Syrian peasants, and Arabs from beyond Palmyra. We know the very time of the day when Saul was entering these shady avenues. It was at midday. The birds were silent in the trees. The hush of noon was on the city. The sun was burning furiously in the sky. The persecutor's companions were enjoying the cool refreshment of shade after their journey, and his eyes rested with satisfaction on those walls which were the end of his mission, and contained the victims of his righteous zeal."

Such was, and is, Damascus.

## CHAPTER XXVI

### DAMASCUS TO BEYROUT

AND now we stand at Damascus—the immortal city, as some have called it. “The pearly city set in emeralds,” as some others have named it. In my diary, from which I will give you a few sentences directly, I have called it the oldest city in the world. With the larger knowledge of to-day, I should hardly so describe it. But I would prefer to say that it is the oldest of which we have any reliable history. When Rome was unknown, and before Greece had a history, and before recorded history began, it was here, and probably as important in its way as it is now. Far inland, and at a great distance from the sea, it has not been subject to the change, which even an Eastern city can undergo, into whose port come the men of all nations, with varying dress, manners, and morals. The traditions as to age and events connected with it are numerous, varied, and interesting. There is a tradition that it was at Damascus that Cain murdered his brother Abel. It will at once be seen that this story makes it almost as old as the historic period of man. It is quite certain that it goes much further back than the oldest of the Patriarchs. A



member of Abraham's household is said, in the Old Testament, to have been an inhabitant of Damascus.

On the north-west of the city there is a building standing at the summit of a lofty hill. That is one of the sacred places of Damascus, though it is on a bleak, bare mountain. When Abraham, of old time, was on his journey from Ur of the Chaldees, it is said that he came to the summit of that hill. We know that the Father of the Faithful left a land in which there was but little, if any, notion of one God. They had gods many, and human victims were sometimes offered in their heathenish services. We also know that Abraham came to Canaan and built altars to the one God of heaven. Many scholars have wondered where and how he got the idea of monotheism. Those who believe in Divine revelation can easily say. Not a few students, apart from revelation, have tried to trace how he came by that exalted notion, seeing that his environment was entirely different. In its way, the question is settled by the tradition which says that when Abraham rested at the top of that hill, the great truth of the unity of the Godhead was revealed to him! More than two thousand years later Mahomet came to visit this same hill, in honour of the memory of Abraham.

From its summit there is a fine view of Damascus. The prophet Mahomet was so charmed with the view that he lingered there for hours. And when at last he was urged to enter the city, he is reported to have said: "That man can enter paradise but once, and as he wanted to enter the heavenly paradise, he would

not enter this city of Damascus.” As you see Damascus from this hill, you can hardly wonder at the words ascribed to Mahomet, for if ever you looked upon an earthly paradise, surely it is here. Its white buildings stand in the midst of gardens intersected by the streams into which its noble river is divided, whose waters bring life and beauty wherever they come. Its many and graceful minarets, like poems in marble, are a joy to behold. Its domes and beautiful towers, rising amid soft green foliage, make a picture pleasant to the eye. It is a great extent of blossom and fragrance. All manner of fruit and flower is here : olive, orange, apricot, plum, pomegranate, rose, jessamine, and other fragrant blooms. It is remarkable that all around it is bare, waste desert, with but little beauty, while the city itself is the choicest of all beautiful places.

Damascus is, and always has been, a great centre of business for the farther East. The Old Testament speaks of the multitude of its wares and of its riches. To-day it is remarkable for its trade. Rich merchants trade between this city and those farther East—Bagdad, Mecca, and other cities. In its bazaars, most famous of all the East, can be found all those manufactures for which the East has ever been noted—silks from its looms, carpets from its frames, famous brass-work from its factories. Damascene silver-work, gold-work, and other precious things you can now purchase in its markets.

This Syrian city is indeed remarkable from every point of view. In its age, in its persistence, in its

wealth, in its trade, in its caravans, and in its beauty it stands out as the most noble of all. In its streets you see all sorts of men, doing all sorts of things. The following lines from the diary may be interesting at this point :

“Damascus is the oldest city in the world. I think it is the truest type of an Oriental city to be found anywhere. We have just been for a ride through its crowded bazaars and streets. I know no way of reproducing its street scenes. You must imagine crowds of men and women dressed in every possible colour, and combination of colours, walking, squatting, smoking, talking, shouting, buying and selling all at once. And then you have not half got it. It has greatly interested me. As I walk through its streets I feel that I am walking in a place older than Abraham. And as these Eastern cities do not change much, we have a real picture of ancient days.”

Since I wrote these words at Damascus on my first visit, I have been to it many times, and I see no reason to change many of the words. I must, however, observe that now it possesses electric tramways !

I cannot speak with authority of its population. But I am told, and I accept the statement without question, that there are at least 240,000 souls in the city. Of this number it is estimated that at least 200,000 are Moslems. There may be 6,000 Jews, 30,000 Greeks and Syrians, 3,000 Marionites, and a small number of Protestants.

You will, of course, like to see the bazaars. They are deeply interesting, and stocked with goods of every



description. These bazaars, which are long rows of shops with a great roof over them, are always alive with people, at whatever hour of the day you go to see them. Here you will see men from all parts, and in all kinds of costume. You will see the native of Persia in beautiful and costly silks. The Greek in his national costume. The venerable Jew, and the Bedouin of the desert. They are a mixed mass, not to be seen in other cities just as they can be in this.

All visitors to Damascus are surprised with the number and variety of men who sell various things in the streets. Their number is only equalled by the variety of articles which they vend. Drinks of all kinds that do not intoxicate can be bought in the streets—lemonade, liquorice water, raisin wine, nuts, fruits, bread, biscuits—anything and everything. How these street traders all live, if this street business be their only source of income, is far more than I can understand. They rattle thin metal dishes, raise peculiar cries, sometimes in voices loud and shrill, and sometimes in tones which are rather pleasant and musical than otherwise.

The Biblical allusions to Damascus are numerous, and some of them important. I cannot attempt to take you through them all. I may, however, refer to one or two of them as we visit the various sights of the city.

I must first of all take you to see the great mosque which is the pride of the Moslems of the city. This is a large and beautiful building. The building itself

is not very ancient, but the site is. You will remember that when Naaman, the great Syrian soldier, who was afflicted with leprosy, had been cured of his malady in Israel, he begged for two mules' burden of earth that he might bring it to the house of his god Rimmon at Damascus (2 Kings v.). It is believed that on this site stood the Temple of Rimmon. Building after building was erected here, temple after temple as the ages passed.

We know that Christianity early took root here at Damascus. In the early Christian centuries there was a great church on this site, and for three centuries it was the cathedral church of Syria. When Damascus fell into the hands of the Moslems, the church was divided between the Moslems and the Christians. This arrangement continued for about two generations, when the Moslems seized the whole, turned the Christians out, made it into a mosque, and it has remained one ever since. It is only one of many great and valuable places, once Christian, which are now Moslem.

There is a tradition that the head of John the Baptist was buried here. This, however, is a doubtful story. As John was beheaded in Samaria, it hardly seems likely that his head would be carried so far for interment. In 2 Kings xvi. 10-11, we are told that King Ahaz went to Damascus, and saw an altar which struck him by its grandeur. He was so pleased with it that he had one made like it for Israel. It is quite probable that he saw it in a building which stood on this very site.

Every visitor to Damascus wants to see the street called "Straight," which is mentioned in the Acts ix. It must once have been a very different street from what you see it to be to-day. There are here and there some traces of its former beauty. There are remains of colonnades to be seen at various parts of the street. It runs across the city; though it is still one of the widest streets, it is but a remnant of what it must have been in former times.

We will drive to the house of Ananias. You may remember that when we read the account of the conversion of Paul, he was led into Damascus to the house of one Ananias. There is now a little Latin chapel at what is said to be the original place where Ananias had his dwelling. It is worthy of note that, as we pass along, we see the house where Naaman, the leper, had his residence. One cannot help feeling that there is some sort of fitness in the place, which bears his name, being turned into a leper house, where those who are afflicted as he was are cared for.

Driving still farther and outside the city, we come upon an old part of the wall, and at one point we see a house partly built into it. This is pointed out as the place down which St. Paul was lowered in a basket when he had to escape from the city as related in the following, Acts ix. 22-25:

"But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ.

"And after that many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel to kill him:



“But their laying await was known of Saul. And they watched the gates day and night to kill him.

“Then the disciples took him by night, and let him down by the wall in a basket.”

It is with regret that I take you out of Damascus, and turn our faces homeward. In bringing you to it, I have, of course, led you beyond the bounds of the land we call Palestine, but it did not seem good to me to return home without taking you to see this chief city of Syria. But we must now leave it. Its bazaars, its minarets, its gardens, orchards, and gleaming white houses, all must be left behind us, to charm other visitors and pilgrims when we have gone.

We take train for Baalbec. As we steam slowly out of Damascus, and begin to mount the hill, we will take a last look at the garden city of the East. Never will you see a city of its size, which looks more beautiful as seen from a distance; nor will you ever see one in whose streets and bazaars there is so much to attract and interest.

For a long time the train takes us alongside the Abana, the great river of Damascus. For miles the ride is a most interesting one. Gardens, orchards, trees, and flowing waters, all make a beautiful and striking picture. We pass up into Lebanon, and for some considerable time you will gaze out of the carriage window charmed at the scenery through which we pass. At length you will arrive at Baalbec.

How can I describe this wonderful place? I have never seen it. In all my nine visits to the land it has never been convenient for me to stop there. On

that account perhaps I might be expected to say a good deal of it. I have noticed on many occasions that the less a man knows of a subject, the more he has to say about it; whilst the man who knows is often the one to say least.

Judging by all the accounts I have ever read and heard from those who have visited this remarkable place, it must be one of the wonders of the world. But as I do not care to write simply what others have said, I must leave you to visit it for yourselves on some other occasion.

Now we start for our last ride. In this marvellous railway ride from Damascus, we pass over the Lebanon and Antilebanon, under the shade of Mount Hermon, and begin our descent of 4,000 feet to Beyrout. Every turn of the train, as it winds and twists about the hills, furnishes us with views of fresh interest. Here, at Beyrout, we take ship and start for home.

I will now give you, as we sail away, the last extract from my diary. I find it entered as

#### “IMPRESSIONS OF PALESTINE.

“I have been greatly struck with the desolate condition of some parts of the land. In the south the mountains rise everywhere, and seem bleak, bare, and barren. The plains, too, look desolate and stony. There are exceptions. The ride from Marsaba to the Dead Sea, along the valley, is one of these exceptions. There, not only are the valleys and mountains romantic and striking, but many of the hills have rich profusion of wild flowers . . . the farther north one goes the better seems the land. The soil, especially in Galilee,

seems to be rich and good. The working of the land is most elementary and poor. The farmer, instead of ploughing, seems just to scratch the land . . . the great need seems to be water. Where there is water there is life. If you travel here and see trees and green fields in the distance, you may conclude, beforehand, that a river or stream of water is there. I have often been struck with the stolid look of indifference upon the faces of many of the people. In the cities the Oriental will sit down at the door of his little shop, seeming to care but little whether he gets customers or not. And if you ask to make a purchase, he is so slow that it seems as if time were of no consequence to him. You should never go shopping in a hurry, unless you are prepared to give him all he asks for his goods, and thus often pay two or three times as much as you ought to do. He loves a bargain—it seems meat and drink to him. In the country districts the Oriental takes things leisurely. Everywhere men squat, and smoke, and sleep. I have come to the conclusion that the women have far the worst of things. They do most of the hard work, and get but little of the pleasures of life. If you meet a man and a woman, in nine cases out of ten, when they have a mule or a donkey, the man rides and the woman walks. . . . It is painful to see at what an early age the girls marry. I understand that the girl has little or no choice in the matter of marriage. . . . The women are kept in subjection and submission to their husbands. A remarkable thing about most of the Moslem women is the veiling of their faces, and the wearing of a peculiar kind of cloak. . . . I am struck by the large numbers who are poor—or seem to be ; and the dirt in which some of them live is sickening to behold. No traveller in the East can help noticing the devotion of the Moslems to



their religion. When the time comes for prayer, to prayer they go. The physical appearance of the people, especially the men, is remarkable. They are fine strong men, and many of them good-looking. One sees all shades of colour, from the darkest to those who are almost as white as myself. Of the women it is difficult to speak, because one sees so little of them. Their faces are for the most part covered. I do not remember seeing one handsome, good-looking native old woman. Of the moral condition of the people I must not say much. You must remember that nearly all the natives are Moslems, and are allowed a plurality of wives. Upon the whole I believe the moral life of the people is good. I am sorry to say that missionaries and others tell me that of late years some of the natives have adopted European habits and customs, and also European sins. As to the amusements of the people I have little to say. The women have no public amusements of any kind. If you walk the streets at night, men and boys are there, but scarcely any women. The men have their amusements. They smoke, play cards and bagatelle, and drink coffee. In some of the cities, rooms have been opened which are not unlike low music-halls. The one good feature that struck me was, the natives do not get drunk. I am afraid, however, that it will be a long time before this land is won for Christ."

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